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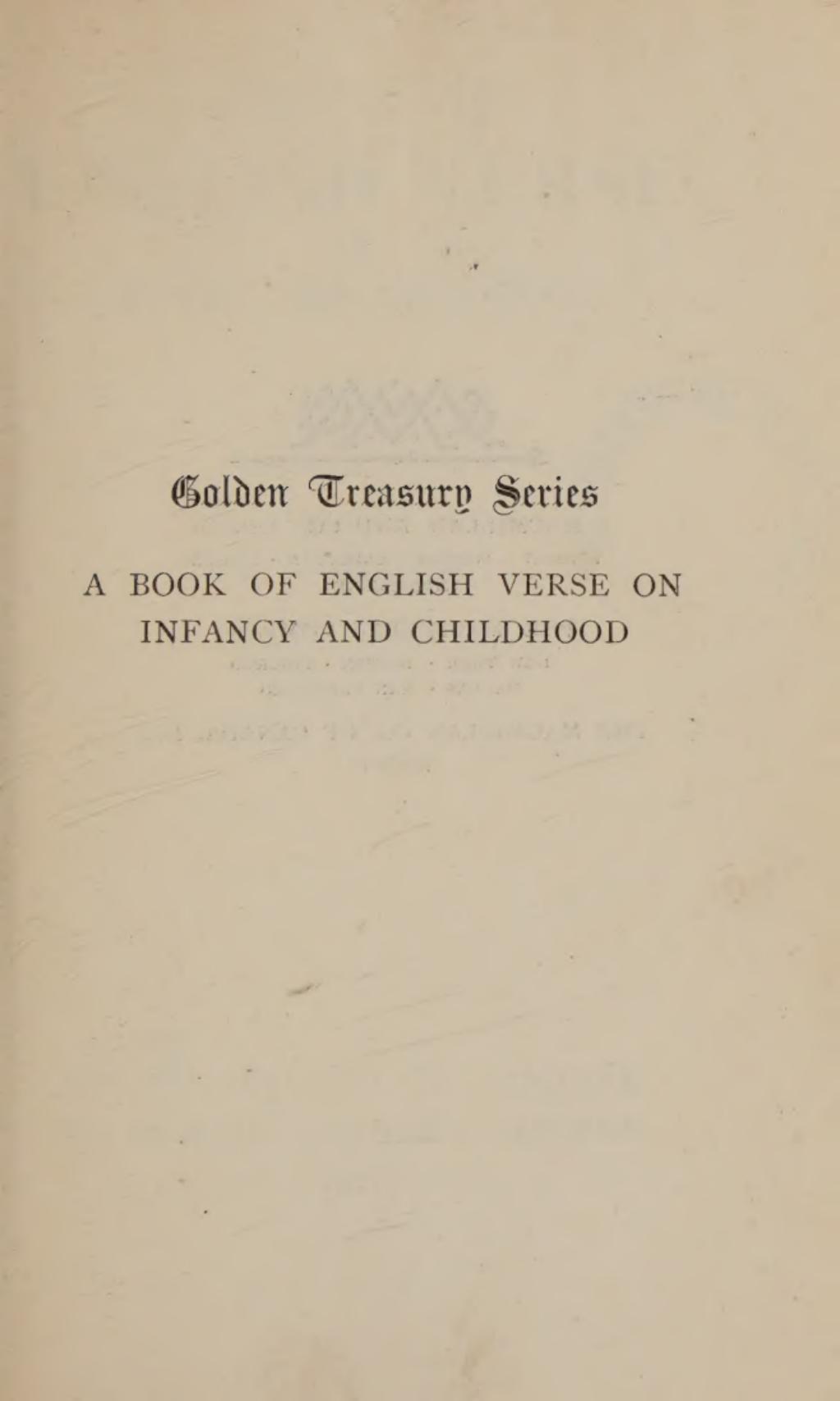
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# Golden Treasury Series

## A BOOK OF ENGLISH VERSE ON INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD



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TORONTO

A BOOK OF  
ENGLISH VERSE  
ON  
INFANCY AND CHILDHOOD

CHOSEN BY

L. S. WOOD



MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED  
ST. MARTIN'S STREET, LONDON

1921

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TO  
THE SWEET MEMORY  
OF MY LITTLE DAUGHTER  
TENNY  
(ETHEL CAROLINE TENNANT WOOD)  
14 NOV. 1916—7 JUNE 1919

*Primitiae Deo et Agno Sacrae*



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## INTRODUCTION

THIS Anthology is not a book of verse for children, but a book of verse about children. It has been said that childhood is the discovery of English poetry, but there appears to exist on this theme no representative anthology of English verse,—under which title is included American verse. Childhood has been interpreted in its real sense, that is, as covering the first twelve years of life. With the ‘teens’ begin other interests and characteristics.

Childhood is the period of our lives which the majority of us find it most difficult to recall. It is true that we remember the incidents of its later years. The setting of the picture remains more or less vivid. But the inner meaning—*how we felt*—has become a sealed book to too many. Few retain the inner light, which Vaughan and Wordsworth sighed for not wholly in vain, that enables them to

travel back  
And tread again that ancient track.

The activities and trivialities of earth have blotted out the unsullied vision of childhood and caused it to fade into the light of common day.

It is this sense of remoteness that has inspired in finer natures a reverence for childhood that is akin to awe. Francis Thompson felt it :

I would not fear thee, sweet, at all,  
Wert thou not so harmless-small.

Mr. G. K. Chesterton doubts if anyone of any tenderness or imagination can see the hand of a child and not be a little frightened of it. If our behaviour to children seems condescending, it cloaks a profound respect. We feel that they and their ways are supernatural.

One reason for this is our sense of children's vast potentialities—far greater than ours, since as yet they are untrammelled by upbringing and custom—and their complete unconsciousness of their own wealth. 'Our misery,' wrote Thomas Traherne in his *Centuries of Meditation*, 'proceedeth ten thousand times more from the outward bondage of opinion and custom, than from any inward corruption or depravation of Nature: . . . it is not our parents' loins, so much as our parents' lives, that entralls and blinds us: . . . In my pure primitive virgin Light, while my apprehensions were natural and unmixed, I cannot remember but that I was ten thousand times more prone to good and excellent things than evil.'

Another feature of childhood that eludes us is children's unquestioning acceptance of the order of things in which they find themselves. The writer of the twenty-third Psalm has given the most complete picture of earthly happiness that has ever been drawn. He conceived a

state of mind accepting earthly conditions and circumstances without question or doubt, secure from every care through a sense of Divine protection, and enjoying the gifts of Nature with gratitude and simplicity. He depicts that contentment that appears to lie within the reach of all, but to which none attain. Yet childhood inhabits this country. This Heaven lies about us in our infancy. The Psalmist has described no unknown land, but the land through which most of us have travelled on our way to riper years. Possibly the memory of it was his inspiration.

It seems to the compiler that there is a place for a representative anthology of English verse upon infancy and childhood. The poets are the world's 'Seers.' They are less influenced by custom and convention than other men. They are more conscious of human potentiality and have a clearer vision of human destiny. In these and other ways they are nearer to childhood and more able to interpret it. Moreover, poems on childhood are comparatively few in number, and many of them are little known. They are scattered in many volumes by many writers, and the light they throw on the most beautiful period of human life is thus lost to persons who are interested in children but who are not regular readers of poetry.

In this book the aim has been to present poetry for poetry's sake. The compiler has used what judgment and ability he has to bind into the garland nothing that is not worthy of the august name of Poetry—nothing that does not reach a certain level of genius.

For this reason many poems beautiful in conception but lacking something in finish and form have been excluded. Others, some of them well known, have been excluded on the ground that they treat of childhood sentimentally, that is to say with conventional emotion. A severe critic may discover here and there a poem that owes its presence rather to the happy choice of its subject than to its intrinsic merits. And poems reminiscent of childhood, poems of motherhood, incidents from human life and even aspects of Nature have been included deliberately, in order to give variety to the collection and to lighten the task of the reader. No verbal changes have been made, but a few of the poems have been extracted from longer poems and, in the case of Shakespeare, from plays. In others omissions have been made when it seemed that by doing so a greater unity of idea or a more uniform level of excellence was secured. In a subject anthology such as this the task of the gatherer is less easy than in a general anthology. In a general anthology there is no limitation but length of poem, size of volume and the law of copyright. In a subject anthology these restrictions exist, but there is added to them the limitation of subject. The aim here has been to offer a book that is representative, not exhaustive, and representative of the poetry on the subject, not of any particular poet, the bulk of whose work may have lain, and in most cases did lie, in other directions.

A chronological order—chronological according to the authors' dates of birth—has been

adopted as being on the whole the most interesting and the most satisfactory. This arrangement has not been rigidly kept in the case of living authors.

The earliest child poem in the language is *The Pearl*, which dates from the fourteenth century. The poem is some twelve hundred lines in length; selection would not be easy, and were any portion of it included in the present volume it would be necessary to modernise the language. But reference must be made to it. The poet laments the loss of a daughter in early years. Falling asleep on the grave from sorrow, he visits in dreams a strange country, where he meets a white-robed maiden whom eventually he recognises. He asks her whether she is really his Pearl, since whose loss he has been 'a joyless jeweller.' The picture of the maiden, the review of Heaven, the painting of the scenery, and, above all, the strong passion of the writer make the poem a notable one.

William Langland, in the *Vision of Piers Plowman*, tells us the interesting fact that children became so precious as a result of the Black Death that there was a tendency to spoil them, a tendency not common in the fourteenth century. Chaucer has given two notable pictures of childhood, the little clergeoun of the *Prioress' Tale* and the children of Erl Hugelyn of Pyze, in the tale of the Monk, who concludes by referring his hearers to Dante. But what struck foreigners at this time was rather the lack of affection the English showed to their children. At the age of seven to nine years

boys and girls alike were bound to hard service as apprentices in the houses of other people, whence they seldom returned. In the upper classes younger sons habitually went out as pages, and the *Paston Letters* give the impression that middle-class homes were too full of the hard business of life to allow of much room for the domestic affections.

Southwell's *Burning Babe* stands prominent among that class of poems to which later child poetry probably owes much of its inspiration, poems written in honour of the Infant Christ. Before Southwell was hanged as a Jesuit, Shakespeare was already famous. The drama does not lend itself to the portrayal of childhood, though children had figured in some of the Mystery Plays. In the moving scene of Hubert and Arthur in *King John*, Arthur does not speak as a normal child, nor in the scene in which Gloucester commits the Princes to the Tower in *Richard III.* is the Prince's interest in the history of the Tower natural. None the less children pass naturally across the background of several of Shakespeare's plays, and from his day, in spite of the damping influence of Puritanism with its insistence upon intellectualism and conversion, and the consequent *im*-perfection of childhood, children figure more and more in our poetry.

In the child poetry of the seventeenth century Thomas Traherne to-day takes the foremost place, though, until his work was given to the world within the last few years by Mr. Bertram Dobell, that place was held by Vaughan. Were

it not certain that Traherne's work was unknown to Wordsworth, it would have been difficult to believe that he did not owe to him some of his inspiration.

William Blake is the great child poet of the eighteenth century. Of Blake, Lamb and Wordsworth were younger contemporaries, and from the days of Wordsworth, the Laureate of Childhood, and of his disciple Hartley Coleridge, the claims and possibilities of childhood as a theme for poetry have been more and more generally realised. Wordsworth is not less the poet of Childhood than the poet of Nature. Children enter naturally into many of his poems that are not child poems. It would be difficult to find a more haunting passage in English Literature than the lines in *Ruth* :

I, too, have passed her on the hills  
Setting her little water-mills  
By spouts and fountains wild—  
Such small machinery as she turned  
Ere she had wept, ere she had mourned,  
A young and happy Child !

After Wordsworth, Landor, Keble, Barnes, Longfellow, Whittier, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Coventry Patmore, Robert Louis Stevenson, T. E. Brown, Swinburne and Francis Thompson are some of the names that are prominent. It would be easy to name many contemporary poets. The way of regarding childhood that was the gospel of the few—for Blake, Wordsworth and Lamb were writing of the wonder, the sanctity and the indefeasible rights of child-

hood during the worst days of the callous brutality to children that marked the Industrial Revolution—has become during the last hundred years the accepted creed of the many.

I owe much to my friends. Mr. and Mrs. G. K. Chesterton, Professor Oliver Elton, Mr. Edmond Holmes, Judge A. Romer Macklin and Mr. Dover Wilson have read large portions of the MS. and given valued advice. I also record my thanks to Miss Bertha Brown and my daughter Angela for copying several of the poems, to Miss A. McIntosh—‘Nannie’—for many times rearranging the disordered pages of the MS., and to Miss Dora Nussey for help with some of the proofs.

For permission to include copyright poems—permission that has often amounted to far more than consent—thanks are due to the Marquess of Crewe, the Earl of Rosslyn, Dr. Greville MacDonald, and the Rev. F. M. T. Palgrave for their fathers’ poems, and to Mrs. Duffin for *Angels* by her father, J. S. Drennan; to Miss Laura B. King for the poem by her mother, Mrs. Hamilton King; to Mrs. William Allingham, Mrs. Beeching, Mrs. Edward Dowden, Mrs. F. W. H. Myers, and Mrs. Coventry Patmore for selections from the works of their respective husbands; to Sir Herbert Stephen, Bart., for his brother’s poem *Blue Hills*; and to Mr. Wilfrid Meynell for Francis Thompson’s poems.

For the poems appearing under their names I have to express my gratitude to the Poet Laureate, Dr. Robert Bridges, Mr. Henry

Allsopp, Mr. Hilaire Belloc, Mr. Laurence Binyon, Mr. John le Gay Brereton, Mr. William Canton, Mr. P. R. Chalmers, Mr. and Mrs. G. K. Chesterton, Mr. W. H. Davies, the Rev. W. J. Dawson, Mr. Austin Dobson, Mrs. Helen Parry Eden, Mr. John Freeman, Miss Rose Fyleman, Mr. W. W. Gibson, Lady Glenconner, Mr. Edmund Gosse, Mr. Thomas Hardy, Mrs. Katharine Tynan Hinkson, Mr. E. G. A. Holmes, Mr. F. M. Hueffer, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, Mr. Shane Leslie, Mr. S. R. Lysaght, Mr. Hugh Macnaghten, Mr. Walter de la Mare, Mr. John Masefield, Miss Annie Matheson, Mrs. Meynell, Sir Henry Newbolt, Mrs. M. Nightingale, Mr. Alfred Noyes, Mr. James Rhoades, Mr. G. W. Russell, Sir Owen Seaman, Miss Cicely Fox Smith, Sir Rabindranath Tagore, Mrs. M. St. J. Webb, Mrs. Margaret L. Woods, and Mr. G. Winthrop Young.

My obligations to publishers are included in the Notes.

Every effort has been made to trace those holding rights over poems that may still be copyright. If there are any—authors, executors or publishers—whose rights have been overlooked, I assure them that the fault is unintentional and beg their forgiveness.

L. S. W.

THE CLIFF, ILKLEY,  
YORKS, 6th August, 1920.

Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.

Matt. xix. 13-15.

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

Mark x. 13-16.

And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

Luke xviii. 15-17.

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. . . . Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

Matt. xviii. 1-6 and 10.

# A Book of English Verse on Infancy and Childhood

ANONYMOUS

I

## FIFTEENTH CENTURY CAROL

I sing of a maiden  
That is makeles,  
King of all kings  
To her son she ches.

He came al so still  
There his mother was,  
As dew in April  
That falleth on the grass.

He came al so still  
To his mother's bour,  
As dew in April  
That falleth on the flour.

He came al so still  
There his mother lay,  
As dew in April  
That falleth on the spray.

Mother and maiden  
Was never none but she ;  
Well may such a lady  
Goddes mother be.



## JOHN SKELTON

II

*TO MAYSTRESS ISABELL PENNELL*

By saynt Mary, my lady,  
 Your mammy and your dady  
 Brought forth a godeley babi !

My mayden Isabell,  
 Reflaring rosabell,  
 The flagrant camamell ;

The ruddy rosary,  
 The souerayne rosemary,  
 The praty strawberry ;

The columbyne, the nepte,  
 The ieloffer well set,  
 The propre vyolet ;

Enuwyd your colowre  
 Is lyke the dasy flowre  
 After the Aprill showre ;

Sterre of the morow gray,  
 The blossom on the spray,  
 The fresshest flowre of May ;

Maydenly demure,  
 Of womanhode the lure ;  
 Wherfore I make you sure,

It were an heuenly helth,  
 It were an endeles welth,  
 A lyfe for God hymselfe,

To here this nightingale,  
 Amonge the byrdes smale,  
 Warbelynge in the vale,  
 Dug, dug,  
 Iug, iug,  
 Good yere and good luk,  
 With chuk, chuk, chuk, chuk !

## RICHARD EDWARDES

III

*MADRIGAL*

In going to my naked bed,  
 As one that would have slept,  
 I heard a wife sing to her child  
 That long before had wept.  
 She sighèd sore and sang full sweet  
 To bring the babe to rest,  
 That would not cease, but crièd still  
 In sucking at her breast.

She was full weary of her watch,  
 And grievèd with her child :  
 She rockèd it, and rated it,  
 Till that on her it smil'd.  
 Then did she say, ' Now have I found  
 This proverb true to prove,  
 " The falling out of faithful friends  
 Renewing is of love." '

## EDMUND SPENSER

IV

*THE POET'S BOYHOOD*

Whilome in youth, when flower'd my joyful  
 spring,  
 Like swallow swift I wandred here and there ;  
 For heate of heedless lust me so did sting,  
 That I of doubted danger had no feare :  
 I went the wastefull woodes and forest wide,  
 Withouten dreade of wolves to bene espyed.  
 I wont to raunge amydde the mazie thickette,  
 And gather nuttes to make me Christmas game,  
 And joyèd oft to chase the trembling pricket,

Or hunt the hartless hare till she were tame.  
What wreakèd I of wintrye ages waste ?—  
Tho deemèd I my spring would ever laste.

How often have I scaled the craggie oke,  
All to dislodge the raven of her nest ?  
How have I wearièd with many a stroke  
The stately walnut-tree, the while the rest  
Under the tree fell all for nuts at strife ?  
For ylike to me was libertee and lyfe.

## v

*CHILDREN IN PROCESSION*

And, them before, the fry of children young  
Their wanton sports and childish mirth did  
play,  
And to the Maidens' sounding timbrels sung  
In well attunèd notes a joyous lay,  
And made delightful musick all the way.

## SIR PHILIP SIDNEY

## vi

*CHILD-SONG*

Sleepe, babie mine, Desire's nurse, Beautie,  
singeth ;  
Thy cries, O babie, set mine head on aking.  
The babe cries, ' Way, thy love doth keepe me  
waking.'  
Lully, lully, my babe, Hope cradle bringeth  
Unto my children alway good rest taking.  
The babe cries, ' Way, thy love doth keepe me  
waking.'  
Since, babie mine, from me thy watching  
springeth,  
Sleepe then, a little ; pap Content is making.  
The babe cries, ' Nay, for that abide I waking.'

## ANONYMOUS (? XV. CENTURY)

## VII

*LULLY, LULLAY.*

Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child ;  
By, by, lullay, lullay, thou little tiny child ;  
By, by, lully, lullay.

O sisters too ! how may we do,  
For to preserve this day  
This poor youngling, for whom we do sing  
By, by, lully, lullay ?

Herod, the king, in his raging,  
Chargèd he hath this day  
His men of might, in his own sight,  
All young children to slay.

That woe is me, poor child for thee !  
And ever morn and day,  
For thy parting neither say nor sing,  
By, by, lully, lullay.

## ROBERT GREENE

## VIII

*SEPHESTIA'S SONG TO HER CHILD*

Weep not, my Wanton ! smile upon my knee ;  
When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

Mother's wag, pretty boy,  
Father's sorrow, father's joy !  
When thy father first did see  
Such a boy by him and me ;  
He was glad ; I was woe ;  
Fortune changèd made him so,  
When he left his pretty boy,  
Last his sorrow, first his joy.

Weep not, my Wanton ! smile upon my knee ;  
 When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.  
 Streaming tears that never stint,  
 Like pearl-drops from a flint,  
 Fell by course from his eyes,  
 That one another's place supplies :  
 Thus he grieved in every part ;  
 Tears of blood fell from his heart,  
 When he left his pretty boy,  
 Father's sorrow, father's joy.

Weep not, my Wanton ! smile upon my knee ;  
 When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.  
 The Wanton smiled ; father wept,  
 Mother cried, baby leapt ;  
 More he crowed, more we cried,  
 Nature sorrow could not hide :  
 He must go, he must kiss,  
 Child and mother ; baby bless ;  
 For he left his pretty boy,  
 Father's sorrow, father's joy.

Weep not, my Wanton ! smile upon my knee ;  
 When thou art old, there's grief enough for thee.

ROBERT SOUTHWELL

IX

*THE BURNING BABE*

As I in hoary winter's night Stood shivering in  
 the snow,  
 Surprised I was with sudden heat, Which made  
 my heart to glow ;  
 And lifting up a fearful eye To view what fire  
 was near,  
 A pretty babe all burning bright Did in the  
 air appear ;  
 Who, scorched with excessive heat, Such floods  
 of tears did shed,

As though His floods should quench His flames,  
 Which with His tears were bred :—  
 ‘ Alas ! ’ quoth He, ‘ but newly born, In fiery  
 heats I fry,  
 Yet none approach to warm their hearts Or feel  
 my fire but I ! ’

‘ My faultless breast the furnace is ; The fuel,  
 wounding thorns ;  
 Love is the fire, and sighs the smoke ; The ashes  
 shames and scorns ;  
 The fuel Justice layeth on, And Mercy blows  
 the coals,  
 The metal in this furnace wrought Are men’s  
 defilèd souls :  
 For which, as now on fire I am To work them to  
 their good,  
 So will I melt into a bath To wash them in my  
 blood ! ’  
 With this He vanish’d out of sight, And swiftly  
 shrunk away ;  
 And straight I callèd unto mind That it was  
 Christmas-day.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

x

*BOYS' FRIENDSHIP*

We were

Two lads that thought there was no more behind,  
 But such a day to-morrow as to-day,  
 And to be boy eternal.  
 We were as twinn’d lambs that did frisk i’ the  
 sun,  
 And bleat the one at th’ other : what we chang’d,  
 Was innocence for innocence ; we knew not  
 The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream’d  
 That any did. Had we pursu’d that life,

And our weak spirits ne'er been higher rear'd  
 With stronger blood, we should have answer'd  
     heaven  
 Boldly, ' Not guilty ' ; the imposition clear'd,  
 Hereditary ours.

## XI

*GIRLS' FRIENDSHIP*

Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,  
 The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,  
 When we have chid the hasty-footed time  
 For parting us,—O ! is it all forgot ?  
 All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence ?  
 We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,  
 Have with our needls created both one flower,  
 Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,  
 Both warbling of one song, both in one key ;  
 As if our hands, our sides, voices and minds,  
 Had been incorporate. So we grew together,  
 Like to a double cherry, seeming parted ;  
 But yet a union in partition,  
 Two lovely berries moulded on one stem :  
 So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart ;  
 Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,  
 Due but to one, and crownèd with one crest.

. . . We still have slept together,  
 Rose at an instant, learn'd, play'd, eat together  
 And wheresoe'er we went, like Juno's swans,  
 Still we went coupled and inseparable.

## XII

*THE GRIEF OF ARTHUR'S MOTHER*

I am not mad : this hair I tear is mine ;  
 My name is Constance ; I was Geoffrey's wife ;  
 Young Arthur is my son, and he is lost :  
 I am not mad ;—I would to Heaven I were !

For then 'tis like I should forget myself :  
O, if I could, what grief should I forget !—  
Preach some philosophy to make me mad,  
And thou shalt be canoniz'd, cardinal ;  
For, being not mad, but sensible of grief,  
My reasonable part produces reason  
How I may be deliver'd of these woes,  
And teaches me to kill or hang myself :  
If I were mad, I should forget my son,  
Or madly think a babe of clouts were he :  
I am not mad : too well, too well I feel  
The different plague of each calamity. . . .

And, father cardinal, I have heard you say  
That we shall see and know our friends in  
Heaven :

If that be true, I shall see my boy again ;  
For, since the birth of Cain, the first male  
child,

To him that did but yesterday suspire,  
There was not such a gracious creature born.  
But now will canker sorrow eat my bud,  
And chase the native beauty from his cheek,  
And he will look as hollow as a ghost,  
As dim and meagre as an ague's fit ;  
And so he'll die ; and, rising so again,  
When I shall meet him in the Court of Heaven  
I shall not know him : therefore never, never  
Must I behold my pretty Arthur more. . . .

Grief fills the room up of my absent child,  
Lies in his bed, walks up and down with me,  
Puts on his pretty looks, repeats his words,  
Remembers me of all his gracious parts,  
Stuffs out his vacant garments with his form  
Then, have I reason to be fond of grief. . . .

O Lord ! my boy, my Arthur, my fair son !  
My life, my joy, my food, my all the world !  
My widow-comfort, and my sorrow's cure !

## XIII

*SIR JAMES TYRREL ON THE MURDER  
OF THE PRINCES*

The tyrannous and bloody act is done ;  
 The most arch deed of piteous massacre  
 That ever yet this land was guilty of.  
 Dighton and Forrest, whom I did suborn  
 To do this piece of ruthless butchery,  
 Albeit they were flesh'd villains, bloody dogs,  
 Melting with tenderness and mild compassion,  
 Wept like to children in their death's sad story.  
 'O thus,' quoth Dighton, 'lay the gentle  
  babes,—  
 ' Thus, thus,' quoth Forrest, 'girdling one  
  another  
 Within their alabaster innocent arms ;  
 Their lips were four red roses on a stalk,  
 Which in their summer beauty kiss'd each other.  
 A book of prayers on their pillow lay ;  
 Which once,' quoth Forrest, 'almost chang'd  
  my mind ;  
 But, O, the devil'—there the villain stopp'd ;  
 When Dighton thus told on,—' we smothered  
 The most replenishèd sweet work of nature,  
 That, from the prime creation, e'er she fram'd.'  
 Hence both are gone with conscience and remorse  
 They could not speak ; and so I left them  
  both,  
 To bear this tidings to the bloody king.

## RICHARD ROWLANDS

## xiv

*ULLABY*

Upon my lap my sovereign sits,  
 And sucks upon my breast ;

Meantime his love maintains my life  
And gives my sense her rest.  
Sing lullaby, my little boy,  
Sing lullaby, mine only joy !

When thou hast taken thy repast,  
Repose, my babe, on me ;  
So may thy mother and thy nurse  
Thy cradle also be.  
Sing lullaby, my little boy,  
Sing lullaby, mine only joy !

I grieve that duty doth not work  
All that my wishing would,  
Because I would not be to thee  
But in the best I should.  
Sing lullaby, my little boy,  
Sing lullaby, mine only joy !

Yet as I am, and as I may,  
I must and will be thine,  
Though all too little for thy self  
Vouchsafing to be mine.  
Sing lullaby, my little boy,  
Sing lullaby, mine only joy !

## THOMAS DEKKER

xv

*ULLABY*

Golden slumbers kiss your eyes,  
Smiles awake you when you rise.  
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,  
And I will sing a lullaby,  
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

Care is heavy, therefore sleep you,  
You are care, and care must keep you.  
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,

And I will sing a lullaby;  
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

JOHN DONNE

XVI

*THE NATIVITY*

Immensity, cloister'd in thy dear womb,  
Now leaves His well-beloved imprisonment.  
There He hath made Himself to His intent  
Weak enough now into our world to come.  
But O ! for thee, for Him, hath th' inn no  
room ?

Yet lay Him in this stall, and from th' orient,  
Stars, and wise men will travel to prevent  
The effects of Herod's jealous general doom.  
See'st thou, my soul, with thy faith's eye, how  
He  
Which fills all place, yet none holds Him, doth  
lie ?  
Was not His pity towards thee wondrous high,  
That would have need to be pitied by thee ?  
Kiss Him, and with Him into Egypt go,  
With His kind mother, who partakes thy woe.

XVII

*EPITAPH ON MISTRESS DOROTHY  
DRURY, NIECE OF FRANCIS BACON*

She little promised much,  
Too soon untied.  
She only dreamt she lived,  
And then she died.

## BEN JONSON

## XVIII

*LILY OF A DAY*

It is not growing like a tree  
 In bulk, doth make Man better be ;  
 Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,  
 To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere :

A lily of a day  
 Is fairer far in May,  
 Although it fall and die that night—  
 It was the plant and flower of Light.  
 In small proportions we just beauties see ;  
 And in short measures life may perfect be.

## XIX

*ON MY FIRST SON*

Farewell, thou child of my right hand, and joy ;  
 My sin was too much hope of thee, lov'd boy :  
 Seven years thou wert lent to me, and I thee  
 pay,

Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.  
 Oh, could I lose all father, now ! for why,  
 Will man lament the state he should envy ?  
 To have so soon 'scaped world's, and flesh's rage,  
 And, if no other misery, yet age !  
 Rest in soft peace, and ask'd, say here doth lie  
 BEN JONSON his best piece of poetry :  
 For whose sake henceforth all his vows be such,  
 As what he loves may never like too much.

## XX

*ON MY FIRST DAUGHTER*

Here lies, to each her parents ruth,  
 Mary, the daughter of their youth ;

Yet all heaven's gifts being heaven's due,  
 It makes the father less to rue.  
 At six months' end she parted hence  
 With safety of her innocence :  
 Whose soul heaven's Queen, whose name she  
     bears,  
 In comfort of her mother's tears,  
 Hath placed amongst her virgin-train :  
 Where while that, severed, doth remain,  
 This grave partakes the fleshly birth ;  
 Which cover lightly, gentle earth !

## RICHARD CORBET

## XXI

*TO VINCENT CORBET, HIS SON*

What I shall leave thee, none can tell,  
 But all shall say I wish thee well :  
 I wish thee, Vin, before all wealth,  
 Both bodily and ghostly health ;  
 Nor too much wealth nor wit come to thee,  
 So much of either may undo thee.  
 I wish thee learning not for show,  
 Enough for to instruct and know ;  
 Not such as gentlemen require  
 To prate at table or at fire.  
 I wish thee all thy mother's graces,  
 Thy father's fortunes and his places.  
 I wish thee friends, and one at court,  
 Not to build on, but support ;  
 To keep thee not in doing many  
 Oppressions, but from suffering any.  
 I wish thee peace in all thy ways,  
 Nor lazy nor contentious days ;  
 And, when thy soul and body part,  
 As innocent as now thou art.

## SIR JOHN BEAUMONT

XXII

*ON MY DEAR SON, GERVASE*

Can I, who have for others oft compiled  
 The songs of death, forget my sweetest child,  
 Which, like a flower crushed, with a blast is dead,  
 And ere full time hangs down his smiling head,  
 Expecting with clear hope to live anew,  
 Among the angels fed with heavenly dew ?  
 We have this sign of joy, that many days,  
 While on the earth his struggling spirit stays,  
 The name of Jesus in his mouth contains  
 His only food, his sleep, his ease from pains.  
 O may that sound be rooted in my mind,  
 Of which in him such strong effect I find.  
 Dear Lord, receive my son, whose winning love  
 To me was like a friendship, far above  
 The course of nature, or his tender age ;  
 Whose looks could all my bitter griefs assuage ;  
 Let his pure soul—ordained seven years to be  
 In that frail body, which was part of me—  
 Remain my pledge in heaven, as sent to show  
 How to this port at every step I go.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND OF  
HAWTHORNDEN

XXIII

*FOR THE NATIVITY OF OUR LORD**The Angels.*

Run, Shepherds, run where Bethl'hem blest  
 appears ;  
 We bring the best of news, be not dismay'd—  
 A Saviour there is born, more old than years,  
 Amidst Heaven's rolling heights this earth who  
 stay'd :

In a poor cottage inn'd, a Virgin Maid,  
 A weakling, did Him bear, Who all upbears ;  
 There is He poorly swaddl'd, in manger laid,  
 To Whom too narrow swaddlings are our spheres :  
 Run, Shepherds, run, and solemnize His birth ;  
 This is that night, no, day grown great with bliss,  
 In which the power of Satan broken is ;  
 In Heaven be glory, Peace unto the earth.  
 Thus singing through the air the Angels swam,  
 And cope of stars re-echoèd the same.

*The Shepherds*

O, than the fairest day, thrice fairer night !  
 Night to best days in which a Sun doth rise,  
 Of which that golden eye, which clears the skies,  
 Is but a sparkling ray, a shadow light :  
 And blessedèd ye—in silly pastors' sight—  
 Mild creatures, in whose warm crib now lies  
 That Heaven-sent Youngling, Holy-Maid-born  
 Wight,  
 Midst, end, beginning of our prophecies :  
 Blest cottage that hath flow'rs in winter spread ;  
 Though withered, blessedèd grass, that hath the  
 grace  
 To deck and be a carpet to that place.  
 Thus sang, unto the sounds of oaten reed,  
 Before the Babe the Shepherds, bowed on knees ;  
 And springs ran nectar, honey dropped from  
 trees.

GEORGE WITHER

XXIV

*SLEEP, BABY, SLEEP !*

Sleep, baby, sleep ! What ails my dear,  
 What ails my darling thus to cry ?  
 Be still, my child, and lend thine ear,  
 To hear me sing thy lullaby.  
 My pretty lamb, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my dear ; sweet baby, sleep.

Thou blessed soul, what canst thou fear ?

What thing to thee can mischief do ?

Thy God is now thy father dear,

His holy Spouse thy mother too.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;

Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Though thy conception was in sin,

A sacred bathing thou hast had ;

And though thy birth unclean hath been,

A blameless babe thou now art made.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;

Be still, my dear ; sweet baby, sleep.

While thus thy lullaby I sing,

For thee great blessings ripening be ;

Thine Elder Brother is a king,

And hath a kingdom bought for thee.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;

Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Sweet baby, sleep, and nothing fear ;

For whosoever thee offends

By thy protector threaten'd are,

And God and angels are thy friends.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;

Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

When God with us was dwelling here,

In little babes He took delight ;

Such innocents as thou, my dear,

Are ever precious in His sight.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;

Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

A little infant once was He ;

And strength in weakness then was laid

Upon His virgin mother's knee,

That power to thee might be convey'd.

Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;

Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

In this thy frailty and thy need

He friends and helpers doth prepare,

Which thee shall cherish, clothe, and feed,  
 For of thy weal they tender are.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

The King of kings, when He was born,  
 Had not so much for outward ease ;  
 By Him such dressings were not worn,  
 Nor such-like swaddling-clothes as these.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Within a manger lodged thy Lord,  
 Where oxen lay and asses fed :  
 Warm rooms we do to thee afford,  
 An easy cradle or a bed.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

The wants that He did then sustain  
 Have purchased wealth, my babe, for thee ;  
 And by His torments and His pain  
 Thy rest and ease securèd be.  
 My baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

Thou hast, yet more, to perfect this,  
 A promise and an earnest got  
 Of gaining everlasting bliss,  
 Though thou, my babe, perceiv'st it not.  
 Sweet baby, then, forbear to weep ;  
 Be still, my babe ; sweet baby, sleep.

### WILLIAM BROWNE OF TAVISTOCK

xxv.

#### *PLAYING ON THE BEACH*

Whoso hath seen young lads (to sport themselves)  
 Run in a low ebb to the sandy shelves ;

Where seriously they work in digging wells,  
Or building childish sorts of cockle-shells ;  
Or liquid water each to other bandy ;  
Or with the pebbles play at handy-dandy,  
Till unawares the tide hath clos'd them round,  
And they must wade it through or else be  
drowned.

## xxvi

*BOYS HUNTING A SQUIRREL*

Then as a nimble squirrel from the wood,  
Ranging the hedges for his filberd-food,  
Sits pearly on a bough his brown nuts cracking,  
And from the shell the sweet white kernel taking,  
Till with their crooks and bags a sort of boys,  
To share with him, come with so great a noise  
That he is forc'd to leave a nut nigh broke,  
And for his life leap to a neighbour oak,  
Thence to a beech, thence to a row of ashes ;  
Whilst through the quagmires, and red water  
plashes,  
The boys run dabbling thorough thick and thin ;  
One tears his hose, another breaks his shin,  
This, torn and tatter'd, hath with much ado  
Got by the briars ; and that hath lost his shoe ;  
This drops his band ; that headlong falls for  
haste ;  
Another cries behind for being last ;  
With sticks and stones and many a sounding  
holloa,  
The little fool, with no small sport, they follow,  
Whilst he, from tree to tree, from spray to spray,  
Gets to the wood, and hides him in his dray.

## ROBERT HERRICK

XXVII

*TO HIS SAVIOUR, A CHILD ; A  
PRESENT, BY A CHILD*

Go prettie child, and beare this Flower  
 Unto thy little Saviour ;  
 And tell Him, by that Bud now blown,  
 He is the Rose of Sharon known ;  
 When thou hast said so, stick it there  
 Upon His Bibb, or Stomacher :  
 And tell Him, (for good handsell too)  
 That thou hast brought a Whistle new,  
 Made of a clean straight oaten reed,  
 To charme His cries, (at time of need :  
 Tell Him, for Corall, thou hast none ;  
 But if thou hadst, He shod have one ;  
 But poore thou art, and knowne to be  
 Even as monilesse, as He.  
 Lastly, if thou canst win a kisse  
 From those mellifluous lips of His ;  
 Then never take a second on,  
 To spoile the first impression.

XXVIII

*GRACE FOR A CHILD*

What God gives, and what we take,  
 'Tis a gift for Christ His sake :  
 Be the meale of Beanies and Pease,  
 God be thank'd for those, and these :  
 Have we flesh, or have we fish,  
 All are Fragments from His dish.  
 He His Church save, and the King,  
 And our Peace here, like a Spring,  
 Make it ever flourishing.

## XXIX

*ANOTHER GRACE FOR A CHILD*

Here a little child I stand,  
Heaving up my either hand ;  
Cold as Paddocks though they be,  
Here I lift them up to Thee,  
For a Benizon to fall  
On our meat, and on us all.

## XXX

*UPON A CHILD THAT DYED*

Here she lies, a pretty bud,  
Lately made of flesh and blood :  
Who, as soone, fell fast asleep,  
As her little eyes did peep.  
Give her strewings ; but not stir  
The earth, that lightly covers her.

## XXXI

*UPON A CHILD : AN EPITAPH*

But borne, and like a short Delight,  
I glided by my Parents' sight.  
That done, the harder Fates deny'd  
My longer stay, and so I dy'd.  
If pittyng my sad Parents' Teares,  
You'l spil a tear or two, with theirs :  
And with some flow'rs my grave bestrew,  
Love and they'l thank you for't. Adieu.

## XXXII

*UPON A LADY THAT DYED IN CHILD-BED, AND LEFT A DAUGHTER BEHIND HER*

As Gilly flowers do but stay  
 To blow, and seed, and so away ;  
 So you sweet Lady (sweet as May)  
 The garden's-glory liv'd a while,  
 To lend the world your scent and smile.  
 But when your own faire print was set  
 Once in a Virgin Flosculet,  
 (Sweet, as your selfe, and newly blown)  
 To give that life, resign'd your own :  
 But so, as still the mother's power  
 Lives in the pretty Lady-flower.

## GEORGE HERBERT

## XXXIII

*HOLY BAPTISM*

Since, Lord, to Thee  
 A narrow way and little gate  
 Is all the passage, on my infancy  
 Thou didst lay hold, and antedate  
 My faith in me.

O, let me still  
 Write Thee ' great God,' and me ' a child ' ;  
 Let me be soft and supple to Thy will,  
 Small to myself, to others mild,  
 Behither ill.

Although by stealth  
 My flesh get on ; yet let her sister,  
 My soul, bid nothing but preserve her wealth.  
 The growth of flesh is but a blister ;  
 Childhood is health.

## THOMAS CAREW

XXXIV

*EPITAPH ON THE LADY MARY VILLIERS*

The Lady Mary Villiers lies  
 Under this stone ; with weeping eyes  
 The parents that first gave her birth,  
 And their sad friends, laid her in earth.  
 If any of them, Reader, were  
 Known unto thee, shed a tear ;  
 Or if thyself possess a gem  
 As dear to thee, as this to them,  
 Though a stranger to this place,  
 Bewail in theirs thine own hard case :  
 For thou perhaps at thy return  
 May'st find thy Darling in an urn.

XXXV

*ANOTHER*

The purest soul, that e'er was sent  
 Into a clayey tenement,  
 Inform'd this dust ; but the weak mould  
 Could the great guest no longer hold :  
 The substance was too pure, the flame  
 Too glorious, that thither came.  
 Ten thousand Cupids brought along  
 A grace on each wing, that did throng  
 For place there, till they all oppress'd  
 The seat in which they sought to rest :  
 So the fair model broke, for want  
 Of room to lodge th' inhabitant.

## XXXVI

*ANOTHER*

This little vault, this narrow room,  
Of Love and Beauty is the tomb ;  
The dawning beam, that 'gan to clear  
Our clouded sky, lies darken'd here,  
For ever set to us : by Death  
Sent to enflame the World Beneath.

'Twas but a bud, yet did contain  
More sweetness than shall spring again ;  
A budding star, that might have grown  
Into a Sun when it had blown.  
This hopeful Beauty did create  
New life in Love's declining state ;  
But now his empire ends, and we  
From fire and wounding darts are free ;  
His brand, his bow, let no man fear :  
The flames, the arrows, all lie here.

## WILLIAM STRODE

## XXXVII

*THE LATEST LULLABY*  
*(To Mistress Mary Prideaux)*

Sleep, pretty one, O sleep, while I  
Sing thee thy latest lullaby :  
And may my song be but as she ;  
Ne'er was sweeter harmony.  
Thou wert all music : all thy limbs  
Were but so many well-set hymns  
To praise thy Maker. In thy brow  
I read thy soul, and know not how  
To tell which whiter was or smoother,  
Or more spotless, one or th' other.  
No jar, no harshness in thee : all  
Thy passions were at peace : no gall,

No rough behaviour ; but even such  
In disposition as in touch.

Yet Heaven, poor soul, was harsh to thee :  
Death used thee not half orderly.  
If thou must needs go, must thy way  
Needs be by torture ? Must thy day  
End in the morning ? And thy night  
Come with such horror and affright ?  
Death might have seiz'd thee gentlier, and  
Embrac'd thee with a softer hand.  
Thou wert not sure so loath to go,  
That thou needst be draggèd so ;  
For thou wert all obedience, and hadst wit  
To do Heaven's will and not dispute with it.  
Yet 'twere a hard heart, a dead eye,  
That sighless, tearless, could stand by ;  
While thy poor mother felt each groan  
As much as e'er she did her own  
When she groan'd for thee : and thy cries  
Marr'd not our ears more than her eyes.  
Yet if thou took'st some truce with pain,  
Then was she melted more again  
To hear thy sweet words, whilst thy breath  
Faintly did strive to sweeten Death,  
Call'dst for the music of thy knell,  
And cri'dst, 'twas it must make thee well :  
Thus whilst your prayers were at strife,  
Thine for thy death, hers for thy life,  
Thine did prevail, and, on their wings,  
Mounted thy soul where now it sings,  
And never shall complain no more,  
But for not being there before.

Let her parents then confess  
That they believe her happiness,  
Which now they question. Think as you  
Lent her the world, Heaven lent her you :  
And is it just, then, to complain  
When each hath but his own again ?  
Then, think what both your glories are  
In her preferment : for 'tis far

Nobler to get a saint, and bear  
 A child to Heaven than an heir  
 To a large empire. Think beside  
 She died not young, but liv'd a bride.  
 Your best wishes for her good  
 Were but to see her well bestow'd :  
 Was she not so ? She married to  
 The Heir of all things, who did owe  
 Her infant soul, and bought it too.  
 Nor was she barren : mark'd you not  
 Those pretty little Graces, that  
 Play'd round about her sick-bed ; three,  
 Th' eld'st Faith, Hope and Charity ?  
 'Twere pretty big ones, and the same  
 That cried so on their Father's Name.  
 The young'st is gone with her : the two  
 Eldest stay to comfort you ;  
 And little though they be, they can  
 Master the biggest foes of man.

Lastly think that her abode  
 With you was some few years' board ;  
 After, her marriage : now she's gone  
 Home, royally attended on :  
 And if you had Elisha's sight  
 To see the number of her bright  
 Attendants thither ; or Paul's rapt sprite  
 To see her welcome there ;—why, then,  
 Wish, if you could, her here again.  
 I'm sure you could not : but all passion  
 Would lose itself in admiration,  
 And strong longings to be there,  
 Where, 'cause she is, you mourn for her.

ANONYMOUS (XVII CENTURY)

XXXVIII

*THE CHILD'S DEATH*

He did but float a little way  
 Adown the stream of time ;

With dreamy eyes watching the ripples play,  
Or listening to their chime.

His slender sail

Scarce felt the gale ;

He did but float a little way,

And, putting to the shore,

While yet 'twas early day,

Went calmly on his way,

To dwell with us no more.

No jarring did he feel,

No grating on his vessel's keel ;

A strip of yellow sand

Mingled the waters with the land,

Where he was seen no more ;

O stern word, Nevermore !

Full short his journey was ; no dust

Of earth unto his sandals clave ;

The weary weight, that old men must,

He bore not to the grave.

He seem'd a cherub who had lost his way

And wander'd hither ; so his stay

With us was short ; and 'twas most meet

That he should be no delver in earth's clod,

Nor need to pause and cleanse his feet

To stand before his God.

### XXXIX

*UPON ANNE WORLEY, AGED EIGHT  
YEARS, WHO DIED 3rd SEPTEMBER*

1653

In quiet sleepe here lyes the deare remayne  
Of a sweet Babe, the Father's joye and payne :  
A prytty Infant, loved and lovinge, she  
Was bewtye's Abstract ; love's Epitome :  
A lytle Volume, but devine, whearein  
Was seen both Paradice and Cherubin.  
While she lived here, which was but lytle space,  
A few short yeares, earth had a Heavenly face ;

And dead she lookt a lovely peice of claye  
 After her shineinge soule was fled awaye.  
 Reader, had'st thou her dissolution seen  
 Thou would'st have weep't had'st thou this  
 Marble been.

From a brass in the Chancel of Reigate Parish Church.

## XL

*CHRISTMAS CAROL*

God bless the master of this house,  
 The mistress also,  
 And all the little children,  
 That round the table go,  
 And all your kin and kinsmen,  
 That dwell both far and near,  
 I-wish you a merry Christmas  
 And a happy New Year.

## EDMUND WALLER

## XLI

*TO THE YOUNGER LADY LUCY  
SYDNEY*

Why came I so untimely forth  
 Into a world which, wanting thee,  
 Could entertain us with no worth,  
 Or shadow of felicity ?  
 That time should me so far remove  
 From that which I was born to love.

Yet, fairest Blossom ! do not slight  
 That eye which you may know so soon ;  
 The rosy morn resigns her light  
 And milder splendours to the noon  
 If such thy dawning beauty's power  
 Who shall abide its noon-tide hour ?

Hope waits upon the flowery prime ;  
 And summer though it be less gay,  
 Yet is not looked on as a time  
 Of declination or decay ;  
 For with a full hand she doth bring  
 All that was promised by the spring.

JOHN MILTON

XLII

*ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT  
DYING OF A COUGH*

O fairest flow'r, no sooner blown but blasted,  
 Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,  
 Summer's chief honour, if thou had'st outlasted  
 Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry ;  
 For he being amorous on that lovely dye

That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss  
 But kill'd, alas, and then bewail'd his fatal bliss. . .

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,  
 Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,  
 Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,  
 Hid from the world in a low-delvèd tomb ;  
 Could Heav'n for pity thee so strictly doom ?

Oh no ! for something in thy face did shine  
 Above mortality, that shew'd thou wast divine.

Resolve me then, O Soul most surely blest,  
 (If so be it that thou these plaints dost hear)  
 Tell me, bright Spirit, where'er thou hoverest,  
 Whether above that high first-moving sphere,  
 Or in the Elysian fields (if such there were),

O say me true if thou wert mortal wight,  
 And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy  
 flight.

Wert thou some star which from the ruin'd roof  
 Of shak't Olympus by mischance didst fall ;

Which careful Jove in nature's true behoof  
Took up, and in fit place did reinstall ?  
Or did of late Earth's sons besiege the wall

Of sheeny Heav'n, and thou some goddess fled  
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd  
head ?

Or wert thou that just maid who once before  
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,  
And cam'st again to visit us once more ?

Or wert thou [Mercy], that sweet-smiling youth ?  
Or that crown'd matron, sage white-robèd Truth ?

Or any other of that heav'nly brood  
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some  
good ?

Or wert thou of the golden-wingèd host,  
Who having clad thyself in human weed,  
To earth from thy prefixèd seat didst post,  
And after short abode fly back with speed ;  
As if to show what creatures Heav'n doth breed ;

Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire  
To scorn the sordid world, and unto Heav'n  
aspire ?

But oh, why didst thou not stay here below  
To bless us with thy Heav'n-lov'd innocence,  
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our  
foe,

To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence,  
Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,

To stand 'twixt us and our deservèd smart ?  
But thou canst best perform that office where  
thou art.

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,  
Her false imagin'd loss cease to lament,  
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild ;  
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,  
And render Him with patience what He lent ;

This if thou do, He will an offspring give,  
That till the world's last end shall make thy  
name to live.

## RICHARD CRASHAW

XLIII

*A HYMN OF THE NATIVITY, SUNG  
BY THE SHEPHERDS*

Come, we shepherds, whose blest sight  
Hath met Love's noon in Nature's night :  
Come lift we up our loftier song,  
And wake the sun that lies too long.

Gloomy night embraced the place  
Where the noble Infant lay :  
The Babe looked up, and shewed His face ;  
In spite of darkness it was day :—  
It was Thy day, sweet, and did rise,  
Not from the East, but from Thine eyes.

We saw Thee in Thy balmy nest,  
Young dawn of our eternal day ;  
We saw Thine eyes break from the East,  
And chase the trembling shades away :  
We saw Thee, and we blest the sight,  
We saw Thee by Thine own sweet light.

Poor world, said I, what wilt thou do  
To entertain this starry stranger ?  
Is this the best thou canst bestow—  
A cold and not too cleanly manger ?  
Contend, the powers of heaven and earth,  
To fit a bed for this huge birth.

Proud world, said I, cease your contest,  
And let the mighty Babe alone ;  
The phoenix builds the phoenix' nest,  
Love's architecture is His own.  
The Babe, whose birth embraves this morn,  
Made His own bed ere He was born.

I saw the curl'd drops, soft and slow,  
Come hovering o'er the place's head,

Off'ring their whitest sheets of snow,  
 To furnish the fair Infant's bed.  
 Forbear, said I, be not too bold ;  
 Your fleece is white, but 'tis too cold.

I saw th' obsequious seraphim  
 Their rosy fleece of fire bestow,  
 For well they now can spare their wings,  
 Since Heaven itself lies here below.  
 Well done, said I ; but are you sure  
 Your down, so warm, will pass for pure ?

No, no, your King's not yet to seek  
 Where to repose His royal head ;  
 See, see how soon His new-bloom'd cheek  
 'Twixt mother's breasts is gone to bed !  
 Sweet choice, said we ; no way but so  
 Not to lie cold, yet sleep in snow !

Welcome, all wonders in one sight !  
 Eternity shut in a span !  
 Summer in winter ! Day in night !  
 Heaven in earth ! and God in man !  
 Great Little One, Whose all embracing birth  
 Lifts earth to Heaven, stoops Heaven to earth.

Welcome, tho' nor to gold, nor silk,  
 To more than Caesar's birthright is,  
 Two sister-seas of Virgin-milk,  
 With many a rarely-temper'd kiss,  
 That breathes at once both Maid and Mother,  
 Warms in the one, cools in the other.

She sings Thy tears asleep, and dips  
 Her kisses in Thy weeping eye ;  
 She spreads the red leaves of Thy lips,  
 That in their buds yet blushing lie.  
 She 'gainst those mother diamonds tries  
 The points of her young eagle's eyes.

Welcome—tho' not to those gay flies,  
 Gilded i' th' beams of earthly kings,

Slippery souls in smiling eyes—

But to poor shepherds, homespun things,  
Whose wealth's their flocks, whose wit's to be  
Well read in their simplicity.

Yet, when young April's husband show'rs

Shall bless the fruitful Maia's bed,  
We'll bring the first-born of her flowers,  
To kiss Thy feet and crown Thy head.  
To Thee, dread Lamb, whose love must keep  
The shepherds while they feed their sheep.

To Thee, meek Majesty, soft King

Of simple graces and sweet loves !  
Each of us his lamb will bring,

Each his pair of silver doves !

At last, in fire of Thy fair eyes,  
Ourselves become our own best sacrifice !

## XLIV

*FIRST LINES OF A HYMN TO THE NAME  
AND HONOUR OF THE ADMIRABLE  
SAINT TERESA, WHO, YET A CHILD,  
OUTRAN MATURITY, AND DURST  
PLOT A MARTYRDOM.*

Love, thou art absolute, sole Lord  
Of life and death. To prove the word,  
We'll now appeal to none of all  
Those Thy old soldiers, great and tall,  
Ripe men of martyrdom, that could reach down  
With strong arms their triumphant crown :  
Such as could with lusty breath  
Speak loud, unto the face of death,  
Their great Lord's glorious name ; to none  
Of those whose spacious bosoms spread a throne  
For love at large to fill. Spare blood and sweat :  
We'll see Him take a private seat,  
And make His mansion in the mild  
And milky soul of a soft child.

Scarce has she learnt to lisp the name  
 Of martyr ; yet she thinks it shame  
 Life should so long play with that breath  
 Which spent can buy so brave a death.  
 She never undertook to know  
 What death with love should have to do.  
 Nor has she e'er yet understood  
 Why, to show love, she should shed blood ;  
 Yet, though she cannot tell you why,  
 She can love and she can die.

Scarce has she blood enough to make  
 A guilty sword blush for her sake ;  
 Yet has a heart dares hope to prove  
 How much less strong is death than love.

Be love but there ; let poor six years  
 Be 'pos'd with the maturest fears  
 Man trembles at, you straight shall find  
 Love knows no nonage, nor the mind.  
 'Tis love, not years or limbs that can  
 Make the martyr, or the man.

Love touch'd her heart, and lo it beats  
 High, and burns with such brave heats ;  
 Such thirsts to die, as dares drink up  
 A thousand cold deaths in one cup.  
 Good reason. For she breathes all fire.  
 Her weak breast heaves with strong desire  
 Of what she may with fruitless wishes  
 Seek for amongst her Mother's kisses.

Since 'tis not to be had at home  
 She'll travel to a martyrdom.  
 No home for her, confesses she,  
 But where she may a martyr be.

She'll to the Moors ; and trade with them  
 For this unvalued diadem.  
 She'll offer them her dearest breath,  
 With Christ's name in 't, in change for death.  
 She'll bargain with them ; and will give  
 Them God ; teach them how to live

In Him : or, if they this deny,  
For Him she'll teach them how to die.  
So shall she leave amongst them sown  
Her Lord's blood ; or at least her own.

Farewell then, all the world ! Adieu !  
Teresa is no more for you.  
Farewell, all pleasures, sports, and joys  
(Never till now esteemèd toys) ;  
Farewell, whatever dear may be,  
Mother's arms or father's knee !  
Farewell house, and farewell home !  
She's for the Moors, and martyrdom.

Sweet, not so fast ! lo, thy fair spouse,  
Whom thou seek'st with so swift vows,  
Calls thee back, and bids thee come  
T' embrace a milder martyrdom.

Blest Powers forbid thy tender life  
Should bleed upon a barbarous knife ;  
Or some base hand have power to raze  
Thy breast's chaste cabinet, and uncase  
A soul kept there so sweet : O no,  
Wise Heav'n will never have it so. . . .

### ANDREW MARVELL

#### XLV

### *THE PICTURE OF LITTLE T. C. IN A PROSPECT OF FLOWERS*

See with what simplicity  
This nymph begins her golden days !  
In the green grass she loves to lie,  
And there with her fair aspect tames  
The wilder flowers and gives them names ;  
But only with the roses plays,  
And them does tell  
What colour best becomes them, and what smell.

Who can foretell for what high cause  
This darling of the gods was born ?

Yet this is she whose chaster laws  
The wanton Love shall one day fear,  
And, under her command severe,  
See his bow broke and ensigns torn.

Happy who can  
Appease this virtuous enemy of man !

O then let me in time compound  
And parley with those conquering eyes,  
Ere they have tried their force to wound ;  
Ere with their glancing wheels they drive  
In triumph over hearts that strive,  
And them that yield but more despise :

Let me be laid,  
Where I may see the glories from some shade.

Meantime, whilst every verdant thing  
Itself does at thy beauty charm,  
Reform the errors of the Spring ;  
Make that the tulips may have share  
Of sweetness, seeing they are fair,  
And roses of their thorns disarm ;  
But most procure  
That violets may a longer age endure.

But O, young beauty of the woods,  
Whom Nature courts with fruits and flowers,  
Gather the flowers, but spare the buds ;  
Lest Flora, angry at thy crime  
To kill her infants in their prime,  
Do quickly make th' example yours ;  
And ere we see,  
Nip in the blossom all our hopes and thee.

HENRY VAUGHAN

XLVI

*THE RETREAT*

Happy those early days, when I  
Shined in my angel-infancy !  
Before I understood this place  
Appointed for my second race,  
Or taught my soul to fancy aught  
But a white, celestial thought ;  
When yet I had not walked above  
A mile or two from my first love,  
And looking back—at that short space—  
Could see a glimpse of His bright face ;  
When on some gilded cloud, or flower,  
My gazing soul would dwell an hour,  
And in those weaker glories spy  
Some shadows of eternity ;  
Before I taught my tongue to wound  
My conscience with a sinful sound,  
Or had the black art to dispense  
A several sin to every sense,  
But felt through all this fleshly dress  
Bright shoots of everlastingness.

O how I long to travel back,  
And tread again that ancient track !  
That I might once more reach that plain,  
Where first I left my glorious train ;  
From whence the enlightened spirit sees  
That shady city of palm-trees.  
But ah ! my soul with too much stay  
Is drunk, and staggers in the way !  
Some men a forward motion love,  
But I by backward steps would move,  
And, when this dust falls to the urn,  
In that state I came, return.

## XLVII

*CHILDHOOD*

I cannot reach it ; and my striving eye  
Dazzles at it, as at eternity.

Were now that chronicle alive,  
Those white designs which children drive,  
And the thoughts of each harmless hour,  
With their content, too, in my power,  
Quickly would I make my path even,  
And by mere playing go to heaven.

Why should men love  
A wolf, more than a lamb or dove ?  
Or choose hell-fire and brimstone streams  
Before bright stars and God's own beams ?  
Who kisseth thorns will hurt his face,  
But flowers do both refresh and grace,  
And sweetly living—fie on men !—  
Are, when dead, medicinal then ;  
If seeing much should make staid eyes,  
And long experience should make wise,  
Since all that age doth teach is ill,  
Why should I not love childhood still ?  
Why, if I see a rock or shelf,  
Shall I from thence cast down myself ?  
Or, by complying with the world,  
From the same precipice be hurled ?  
Those observations are but foul,  
Which make me wise to lose my soul.  
And yet the practice worldlings call  
Business, and weighty action all,  
Checking the poor child for his play,  
But gravely cast themselves away.

Dear, harmless age ! the short, swift span  
Where weeping virtue parts with man ;  
Where love without lust dwells, and bends  
What way we please without self-ends.

An age of mysteries ! which he  
Must live twice that would God's face see ;  
Which angels guard, and with it play—  
Angels ! which foul men drive away.

How do I study now, and scan  
Thee more than e'er I studied man,  
And only see through a long night  
Thy edges and thy bordering light !  
O for thy centre and mid-day !  
For sure that is the narrow way !

## XLVIII

*THE BURIAL OF AN INFANT*

Blest infant bud, whose blossom-life  
Did only look about, and fall  
Wearied out in a harmless strife  
Of tears, and milk, the food of all ;  
  
Sweetly didst thou expire : thy soul  
Flew home unstain'd by his new kin ;  
For ere thou knew'st how to be foul,  
Death wean'd thee from the world, and sin.  
  
Softly rest all thy virgin-crumbs  
Lapt in the sweets of thy young breath,  
Expecting till thy Saviour comes  
To dress them, and unswaddle death !

## JOHN DRYDEN

## XLIX

*ON JAMES II.'S INFANT SON*

. . . 'Tis Paradise to look  
On the fair frontispiece of Nature's book.  
If the first opening page so charms the sight,  
Think how th' unfolded volume will delight !

See how the venerable infant lies  
In early pomp ; how through the mother's eyes  
The father's soul with an undaunted view  
Looks out, and takes our homage as his due.  
See on his future subjects how he smiles,  
Nor meanly flatters nor with craft beguiles ;  
But with an open face, as on his throne,  
Assures our birthrights and assumes his own. . .

## L

*ON THE DEATH OF A VERY YOUNG GENTLEMAN*

He who could view the book of destiny,  
And read whatever there was writ of thee,  
O charming youth, in the first opening page,  
So many graces in so green an age, . . .  
Would wonder, when he turned the volume o'er,  
And after some few leaves should find no more,  
Nought but a blank remain, a dead void space,  
A step of life that promised such a race.  
We must not, dare not think, that Heaven began  
A child, and could not finish him a man ; . . .

Thus then he disappeared, was rarified,  
For 'tis improper speech to say he died :  
He was exhaled ; his great Creator drew  
His spirit, as the sun the morning dew.  
'Tis sin produces death ; and he had none,  
But the taint Adam left on every son.  
He added not, he was so pure, so good,  
'Twas but th' original forfeit of his blood ;  
And that so little, that the river ran  
More clear than the corrupted fount began. . . .

## THOMAS TRAHERNE

LI

*THE SALUTATION*

These little limbs,

These eyes and hands which here I find,  
These rosy cheeks wherewith my life begins,

Where have ye been ? behind

What curtain were ye from me hid so long,  
Where was, in what abyss, my speaking tongue ?

When silent I

So many thousand, thousand years  
Beneath the dust did in a chaos lie,

How could I smiles or tears,

Or lips or hands or eyes or ears perceive ?  
Welcome, ye treasures which I now receive.

I that so long

Was nothing from eternity,  
Did little think such joys as ear or tongue

To celebrate or see :

Such sounds to hear, such hands to feel, such  
feet,

Beneath the skies on such a ground to meet.

New burnish'd joys !

Which yellow gold and pearls excel !

Such sacred treasures are the limbs in boys,

In which a soul doth dwell ;

Their organisèd joints and azure veins

More wealth include than all the world contains.

From dust I rise,

And out of nothing now awake,

These brighter regions which salute mine eyes,

A gift from God I take.

The earth, the seas, the light, the day, the  
skies,

The sun and stars are mine ; if those I prize.

Long time before  
 I in my mother's womb was born,  
 A God preparing did this glorious store,  
 The world, for me adorn.  
 Into this Eden so divine and fair,  
 So wide and bright, I come His son and heir.

A stranger here

Strange things doth meet, strange glories see ;  
 Strange treasures lodg'd in this fair world appear,  
 Strange all and new to me ;  
 But that they mine should be, who nothing was,  
 That strangest is of all, yet brought to pass.

LII

*WONDER*

How like an Angel came I down !  
 How bright are all things here !  
 When first among His works I did appear  
 O how their Glory me did crown !  
 The world resembled His Eternity,  
 In which my soul did walk ;  
 And every thing that I did see  
 Did with me talk.

The skies in their magnificence,  
 The lively, lovely air ;  
 Oh how divine, how soft, how sweet, how fair !  
 The stars did entertain my sense,  
 And all the works of God, so bright and pure  
 So rich and great did seem,  
 As if they ever must endure  
 In my esteem.

A native health and innocence  
 Within my bones did grow,  
 And while my God did all his Glories show,  
 I felt a vigour in my sense  
 That was all Spirit. I within did flow  
 With seas of life, like wine ;

I nothing in the world did know  
But 'twas divine.

Harsh ragged objects were concealed,  
Oppressions, tears and cries,  
Sins, griefs, complaints, dissensions, weeping eyes  
Were hid, and only things revealed  
Which heavenly Spirits and the Angels prize.  
The state of Innocence  
And bliss, not trades and povertyes,  
Did fill my sense.

The streets were paved with golden stones,  
The boys and girls were mine,  
Oh how did all their lovely faces shine !  
The sons of men were holy ones,  
In joy and beauty they appeared to me,  
And every thing which here I found,  
While like an Angel I did see,  
Adorned the ground.

Rich diamond and pearl and gold  
In every place was seen ;  
Rare splendours, yellow, blue, red, white, and  
green,  
Mine eyes did everywhere behold.  
Great wonders clothed with glory did appear,  
Amazement was my bliss,  
That and my wealth was everywhere ;  
No joy to this !

Cursed and devised proprieties,  
With envy, avarice  
And fraud, those fiends that spoil even Paradise,  
Flew from the splendour of mine eyes,  
And so did hedges, ditches, limits, bounds,  
I dreamed not aught of those,  
But wandered over all men's grounds,  
And found repose.

Proprieties themselves were mine  
And hedges ornaments,

Walls, boxes, coffers, and their rich contents  
 Did not divide my joys, but all combine.  
 Clothes, ribbons, jewels, laces, I esteemed  
 My joys by others worn :  
 For me they all to wear them seemed  
 When I was born.

## LIII

*INNOCENCE*

But that which most I wonder at, which most  
 I did esteem my bliss, which most I boast,  
 And ever shall enjoy, is that within  
 I felt no stain nor spot of sin.

No darkness then did overshadē,  
 But all within was pure and bright,  
 No guilt did crush nor fear invade,  
 But all my soul was full of light.

A joyful sense and purity  
 Is all I can remember,  
 The very night to me was bright,  
 'Twas Summer in December.

A serious meditation did employ  
 My soul within, which taken up with joy  
 Did seem no outward thing to note, but fly  
 All objects that do feed the eye,

While it those very objects did  
 Admire and prize and praise and love,  
 Which in their glory most are hid,  
 Which presence only doth remove.

Their constant daily presence I  
 Rejoicing at, did see,  
 And that which takes them from the eye  
 Of others offered them to me.

No inward inclination did I feel  
 To avarice or pride ; my soul did kneel

In admiration all the day. No lust, nor strife,  
Polluted then my infant life.

No fraud nor anger in me mov'd,  
No malice, jealousy, or spite ;  
All that I saw I truly lov'd :  
Contentment only and delight

Were in my soul. O Heav'n ! what bliss  
Did I enjoy and feel !  
What powerful delight did this  
Inspire ! for this I daily kneel.

Whether it be that Nature is so pure,  
And custom only vicious ; or that sure  
God did by miracle the guilt remove,  
And made my soul to feel his Love

So early : or that 'twas one day,  
Wherein this happiness I found,  
Whose strength and brightness so do ray,  
That still it seems me to surround,

Whate'er it is, it is a Light  
So endless unto me  
That I a world of true delight  
Did then, and to this day do see.

That prospect was the gate of Heaven, that day  
The ancient Light of Eden did convey  
Into my soul : I was an Adam there,  
A little Adam in a sphere

Of joys ! O there my ravisht sense  
Was entertained in Paradise,  
And had a sight of Innocence,  
Which was beyond all bound and price.

An antepast of Heaven sure !  
I on the earth did reign,  
Within, without me, all was pure :  
I must become a child again.

LIV

*THE RAPTURE*

Sweet Infancy !  
 O fire of heaven ! O sacred Light !  
     How fair and bright !  
     How great am I,  
 Whom all the world doth magnify !

O Heavenly joy !  
 O great and sacred blessedness  
     Which I possess !  
     So great a joy  
 Who did into my arms convoy ?

From God above  
 Being sent, the Heavens me enflame :  
     To praise His Name  
     The stars do move !  
 The burning sun doth shew His love.

O how divine  
 Am I ! To all this sacred wealth,  
     This life and health,  
     Who raised ? Who mine  
 Did make the same ? What hand divine ?

## SIR CHARLES SEDLEY

LV

*CHILD AND MAIDEN*

Ah, Chloris ! could I now but sit  
     As unconcern'd as when  
 Your infant beauty could beget  
     No happiness or pain !  
 When I the dawn used to admire,  
     And praised the coming day,

I little thought the rising fire  
Would take my rest away.

Your charms in harmless childhood lay  
Like metals in a mine ;  
Age from no face takes more away  
Than youth conceal'd in thine.  
But as your charms insensibly  
To their perfection prest,  
So love as unperceived did fly,  
And center'd in my breast.

My passion with your beauty grew,  
While Cupid at my heart  
Still as his mother favour'd you  
Threw a new flaming dart :  
Each glорied in their wanton part ;  
To make a lover, he  
Employ'd the utmost of his art—  
To make a beauty, she.

## JOHN NORRIS

LVI

*TO A CHILD IN HEAVEN*

I care not, though it be  
By the preciser sort thought Popery ;  
We poets can a licence show  
For everything we do :  
Hear then, my little saint,—I'll pray to thee.

If now thy happy mind  
Amidst its various joys can leisure find  
T' attend to anything so' low  
As what I say or do,  
Regard, and be what thou wast ever—kind.

Let not the blest above  
Engross thee quite, but sometimes hither rove :

Fain would I thy sweet image see,  
 And sit and talk with thee ;  
 Nor is it curiosity, but love.

Ah, what delight 'twould be  
 Wouldst thou sometimes by stealth converse  
     with me !  
 How should I thy sweet commerce prize,  
     And other joys despise !  
 Come, then—I ne'er was yet denied by thee.

I would not long detain  
 Thy soul from bliss, nor keep thee here in pain ;  
     Nor should thy fellow-saints e'er know  
     Of thy escape below :  
 Before thou'rt missed, thou shouldst return again.

Sure, Heaven must needs thy love  
 As well as other qualities improve !  
 Come then, and recreate my sight  
     With rays of thy pure light :  
 'Twill cheer my eyes more than the lamps above.

But if Fate's so severe  
 As to confine thee to thy blissful sphere,  
     (And by thy absence I shall know  
     Whether thy state be so),  
 Live happy : but be mindful of me there.

## MATTHEW PRIOR

## LVII

TO A CHILD OF QUALITY, FIVE  
YEARS OLD

Lords, knights and squires, the numerous band  
 That wear the fair Miss Mary's fetters,  
 Were summoned by her high command  
 To show their passions by their letters.

My pen amongst the rest I took,  
 Lest those bright eyes, that cannot read,  
 Should dart their kindling fires, and look  
 The power they have to be obeyed.

Nor quality, nor reputation,  
 Forbids me yet my flame to tell ;  
 Dear Five-years-old befriends my passion,  
 And I may write till she can spēll.

For while she makes her silkworms' beds  
 With all the tender things I swear ;  
 Whilst all the house my passion reads  
 In papers round her baby's hair ;

She may receive and own my flame ;  
 For, though the strictest prudes should know it,  
 She'll pass for a most virtuous dame,  
 And I for an unhappy poet.

Then too, alas ! when she shall tear  
 The lines some younger rival sends ;  
 She'll give me leave to write, I fear,  
 And we shall still continue friends.

For, as our different ages move,  
 'Tis so ordained (would Fate but mend it !)  
 That I shall be past making love,  
 When she begins to comprehend it.

## AMBROSE PHILIPS

## LVIII

## TO CHARLOTTE PULTENEY

Timely blossom, Infant fair,  
 Fondling of a happy pair,  
 Every morn and every night  
 Their solicitous delight,  
 Sleeping, waking, still at ease,  
 Pleasing, without skill to please ;

Little gossip, blithe and hale,  
 Tattling many a broken tale,  
 Singing many a tuneless song,  
 Lavish of a heedless tongue ;  
 Simple maiden, void of art,  
 Babbling out the very heart,  
 Yet abandoned to thy will,  
 Yet imagining no ill,  
 Yet too innocent to blush ;  
 Like the linnet in the bush  
 To the mother-linnet's note  
 Moduling her slender throat ;  
 Chirping forth thy petty joys,  
 Wanton in the change of toys,  
 Like the linnet green, in May  
 Flitting to each bloomy spray ;  
 Wearied then and glad of rest,  
 Like the linnet in the nest :—  
 This thy present happy lot,  
 This, in time will be forgot :  
 Other pleasures, other cares,  
 Ever-busy Time prepares ;  
 And thou shalt in thy daughter see,  
 This picture, once, resembled thee.

## COLLEY CIBBER

## LIX

*THE BLIND BOY*

Oh, say what is that thing called light  
 Which I can ne'er enjoy ?  
 What is the blessing of the sight ?  
 Oh, tell your poor blind boy.

You talk of wondrous things you see,  
 You say ' The sun shines bright.'  
 I feel him warm ; but how can he  
 Or make it day or night ?

My day or night myself I make  
 Whene'er I sleep or play ;  
 And could I ever keep awake  
 It would be always day.

With heavy sighs I often hear  
 You mourn my hopeless woe :  
 But sure with patience I may bear  
 A loss I ne'er can know.

Then let not what I cannot have  
 My cheer of mind destroy :  
 While thus I sing, I am a king,  
 Although a poor blind boy !

ISAAC WATTS

LX

*A CRADLE HYMN*

Hush ! my dear, lie still and slumber,  
 Holy angels guard thy bed !  
 Heavenly blessings without number  
 Gently falling on thy head.

Sleep, my babe ; thy food and raiment,  
 House and home, thy friends provide ;  
 All without thy care or payment :  
 All thy wants are well supplied.

How much better thou'rt attended  
 Than the Son of God could be,  
 When from Heaven He descended  
 And became a child like thee !

Soft and easy is thy cradle :  
 Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay,  
 When His birthplace was a stable  
 And His softest bed was hay. . . .

See the kinder shepherds round Him,  
 Telling wonders from the sky !

Where they sought Him, there they found  
Him,  
With His Virgin-Mother by.

See the lovely Babe a-dressing ;  
Lovely infant, how He smiled !  
When He wept, the Mother's blessing  
Soothed and hushed the holy Child.  
  
Lo, He slumbers in His manger,  
Where the hornèd oxen fed ;  
—Peace, my darling ; here's no danger ;  
Here's no ox anear thy bed !

'Twas to save thee, child, from dying,  
Save my dear from burning flame,  
Bitter groans and endless crying,  
That thy blest Redeemer came.

May'st thou live to know and fear Him,  
Trust and love Him all thy days ; •  
Then go dwell for ever near Him,  
See His face, and sing His praise !

I could give thee thousand kisses,  
Hoping what I most desire ;  
Not a mother's fondest wishes  
Can to greater joys aspire.

JOHN BYROM

LXI

*A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

(Composed in 1745 as a carol for his little daughter  
Dolly, 'for her and for no one else.' )

Christians awake ! salute the happy morn,  
Whereon the Saviour of the world was born.  
Rise to adore the mystery of love,  
Which hosts of angels chanted from above  
With them the joyful tidings first begun  
Of God Incarnate and the Virgin's Son.

Then to the watchful shepherds it was told,  
 Who heard the angelic herald's voice, ' Behold,  
 I bring good tidings of a Saviour's birth  
 To you and all the nations upon earth :  
 This day hath God fulfilled His promised Word,  
 This day is born a Saviour, Christ the Lord.  
 In David's city, shepherds, ye shall find  
 The long foretold Redeemer of mankind.  
 Wrapt up in swaddling clothes the Babe Divine  
 Lies in a manger,—this shall be the sign.'  
 He spake, and straightway the celestial choir,  
 In hymns of joy unknown before, conspire ;  
 The praises of redeeming love they sung,  
 And Heaven's whole orb with Hallelujahs rung :  
 ' God's Highest Glory ' was their anthem still,  
 ' Peace upon earth and mutual good will.'  
 To Bethlehem straight the enlighten'd shepherds  
     ran

To see the wonder God had wrought for man,  
 And found with Joseph and the blessed Maid  
 Her Son, the Saviour, in a manger laid.  
 Amaz'd, the wondrous story they proclaim,  
 The first apostles of His infant fame ;  
 While Mary keeps, and ponders in her heart  
 The heav'nly vision which the swains impart.  
 They to their flocks, still praising God, return,  
 And their glad hearts within their bosoms burn.

Let us, like these good shepherds, then employ  
 Our grateful voices to proclaim the joy :  
 Like Mary, let us ponder in our mind  
 God's wondrous love in saving lost mankind ;  
 Artless and watchful, as these favoured swains,  
 While virgin meekness in the heart remains,  
 Trace we the Babe, who has retrieved our loss,  
 From His poor manger to His bitter Cross,  
 Treading His steps, assisted by His grace,  
 Till man's first heavenly state again takes  
     place.

Then may we hope, th' Angelic thrones among,  
 To sing, redeemed, a glad triumphant song.

He that was born upon this joyful day,  
 Around us all His glory shall display.  
 Saved by His love, incessant we shall sing  
 Of angels, and of angel-men, the King.

## CHARLES WESLEY

## LXII

*FOR A CHILD*

Lamb of God, I look to Thee ;  
 Thou shalt my example be ;  
 Thou art gentle, meek, and mild ;  
 Thou wast once a little child.

Thou didst live to God alone ;  
 Thou didst never seek Thine own ;  
 Thou Thyself didst never please ;  
 God was all Thy happiness.

Loving Jesu, gentle Lamb,  
 In Thy gracious hands I am ;  
 Make me, Saviour, what Thou art !  
 Live Thyself within my heart !

I shall then show forth Thy praise ;  
 Serve Thee all my happy days ;  
 Then the world shall always see  
 Christ, the Holy Child, in me.

## WILLIAM WHITEHEAD

## LXIII

*THE FOURTH BIRTHDAY*

Old creeping time, with silent tread,  
 Has stol'n four years o'er Molly's head ;  
 The rosebud opens on her cheek,  
 The meaning eyes begin to speak ;

And in each smiling look is seen  
The innocence which plays within.  
Nor is the faltering tongue confined  
To lisp the dawning of the mind,  
But firm and full her words convey  
The little all they have to say.

THOMAS GRAY

LXIV

*ODE ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF  
ETON COLLEGE*

Ye distant spires, ye antique towers,  
That crown the wat'ry glade,  
Where grateful Science still adores  
Her Henry's holy shade ;  
And ye, that from the stately brow  
Of Windsor's heights th' expanse below  
Of grove, of lawn, of mead survey,  
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among  
Wanders the hoary Thames along  
His silver-winding way :  
  
Ah happy hills ! ah pleasing shade !  
Ah fields beloved in vain !  
Where once my careless childhood strayed,  
A stranger yet to pain !  
I feel the gales, that from ye blow,  
A momentary bliss bestow,  
As waving fresh their gladsome wing  
My weary soul they seem to soothe,  
And, redolent of joy and youth,  
To breathe a second spring.  
  
Say, Father Thames, for thou hast seen  
Full many a sprightly race  
Disporting on thy margent green  
The paths of pleasure trace,  
Who foremost now delight to cleave

With pliant arm thy glassy wave ?  
 The captive linnet which enthrall ?  
 What idle progeny succeed  
 To chase the rolling circle's speed,  
 Or urge the flying ball ?

While some on earnest business bent  
 Their murmuring labours ply  
 'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint  
 To sweeten liberty ;  
 Some bold adventurers disdain  
 The limits of their little reign,  
 And unknown regions dare descry :  
 Still as they run they look behind,  
 They hear a voice in every wind,  
 And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay Hope is theirs by fancy fed,  
 Less pleasing when possest ;  
 The tear forgot as soon as shed,  
 The sunshine of the breast ;  
 Theirs buxom Health, of rosy hue,  
 Wild Wit, Invention ever-new,  
 And lively Cheer, of Vigour born ;  
 The thoughtless day, the easy night,  
 The spirits pure, the slumbers light,  
 That fly th' approach of morn.

Alas, regardless of their doom,  
 The little victims play !  
 No sense have they of ills to come,  
 Nor care beyond to-day ; . . .

Yet ah ! why should they know their fate,  
 Since sorrow never comes too late,  
 And happiness too swiftly flies ?  
 Thought would destroy their paradise.  
 No more ;—where ignorance is bliss,  
 'Tis folly to be wise.

*EPITAPH ON A CHILD*

Here freed from pain, secure from misery, lies  
 A Child, the darling of his parents' eyes ;  
 A gentler lamb ne'er sported on the plain,  
 A fairer flower will never bloom again !  
 Few were the days allotted to his breath ;  
 Here let him sleep in peace his night of death.

WILLIAM COWPER

*ON THE RECEIPT OF MY MOTHER'S  
PICTURE OUT OF NORFOLK*

My mother ! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,  
 Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed ?  
 Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,  
 Wretch even then, life's journey just begun ?  
 Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unseen, a kiss ;  
 Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—  
 Ah, that maternal smile ! it answers—Yes.  
 I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,  
 I saw the hearse, that bore thee slow away,  
 And, turning from my nurs'ry window, drew  
 A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu !  
 But was it such ?—It was—Where thou art gone  
 Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.  
 May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,  
 The parting word shall pass my lips no more !  
 Thy maidens, griev'd themselves at my concern,  
 Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.  
 What ardently I wish'd, I long believ'd,  
 And, disappointed still, was still deceiv'd.  
 By expectation every day beguil'd,  
 Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.

Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,  
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,  
I learn'd at last submission to my lot,  
But, though I less deplor'd thee, ne'er forgot.

Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,

Children not thine have trod my nursery floor ;  
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,  
Drew me to school along the public way,  
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapp'd  
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet cap,  
'Tis now become a history little known,  
That once we call'd the pastoral house our own.  
Shortliv'd possession ! but the record fair,  
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,  
Still outlives many a storm, that has effac'd  
A thousand other themes less deeply trac'd,  
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,  
That thou might'st know me safe and warmly  
laid ;

Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,  
The biscuit, or confectionary plum ;  
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd  
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and  
glow'd ;

All this, and more endearing still than all,  
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,  
Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and breaks,  
That humour interpos'd too often makes ;  
All this still legible in memory's page,  
All still to be so to my latest age,  
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay  
Such honours to thee as my numbers may ;  
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,  
Not scorn'd in Heav'n, though little notic'd here.

Could Time, his flight revers'd, restore the  
hours,

When, playing with thy vesture's tissu'd flow'rs,  
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,  
I prick'd them into paper with a pin,

(And thou wast happier than myself the while,  
Wouldst softly speak, and stroke my head, and  
smile)

Could those few pleasant days again appear,  
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them  
here ?

I would not trust my heart—the dear delight  
Seems so to be desir'd, perhaps I might—  
But no—what here we call our life is such,  
So little to be lov'd, and thou so much,  
That I should ill requite thee to constrain  
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

## LXVII

*BUNYAN'S PILGRIM'S PROGRESS*

O thou, whom, borne on fancy's eager wing  
Back to the season of life's happy spring,  
I pleas'd remember, and, while memory yet  
Holds fast her office here, can ne'er forget ;  
Ingenious dreamer, in whose well-told tale  
Sweet fiction and sweet truth alike prevail ;  
Whose hum'rous vein, strong sense, and simple  
style

May teach the gayest, make the gravest smile ;  
Witty, and well employ'd, and, like thy Lord,  
Speaking in parables His slighted word ;  
I name thee not, lest so despis'd a name  
Should move a sneer at thy deservèd fame ;  
Yet ev'n in transitory life's late day,  
That mingles all my brown with sober gray,  
Revere the man, whose PILGRIM marks the road,  
And guides the PROGRESS of the soul to God.  
'Twere well with most, if books, that could  
engage

Their childhood, pleas'd them at a riper age ;  
The man, approving what had charm'd the boy,  
Would die at last in comfort, peace, and joy.

## LXVIII

*THE PLAYGROUND*

Be it a weakness, it deserves some praise,  
 We love the play-place of our early days ;  
 The scene is touching, and the heart is stone  
 That feels not at that sight, and feels at none.  
 The wall on which we tried our graving skill,  
 The very name we carved subsisting still ;  
 The bench on which we sat while deep employ'd,  
 Though mangled, hack'd, and hew'd, not yet  
     destroy'd ;  
 The little ones unbutton'd, glowing hot,  
 Playing our games, and on the very spot ;  
 As happy as we once, to kneel and draw  
 The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw  
 To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,  
 Or drive it devious with a dexterous pat ;  
 The pleasing spectacle at once excites  
 Such recollection of our own delights,  
 That, viewing it, we seem almost t' obtain  
 Our innocent sweet simple years again.

## GEORGE CRABBE

## LXIX

*FIRST GRIEF*

Yes ! looking back as early as I can,  
 I see the griefs that seize their subject Man,  
 That in the weeping Child their early reign  
     began ;  
 Yes ! though Pain softens, and is absent since,  
 He still controls me like my lawful prince.  
 Joys I remember, like phosphoric light  
 Or squibs and crackers on a gala night.  
 Joys are like oil ; if thrown upon the tide  
 Of flowing life, they mix not, nor subside :

Griefs are like waters on the river thrown,  
 They mix entirely, and become its own.  
 Of all the good that grew of early date,  
 I can but parts and incidents relate :  
 A guest arriving, or a borrow'd day  
 From school, or schoolboy triumph at some play :  
 And these from Pain may be deduced ; for these  
 Removed some ill, and hence their power to  
 please.

But it was Misery stung me in the day  
 Death of an infant sister made a prey ;  
 For then first met and moved my early fears,  
 A father's terrors, and a mother's tears.  
 Though greater anguish I have since endured,—  
 Some heal'd in part, some never to be cured ;  
 Yet was there something in that first-born ill,  
 So new, so strange, that memory feels it still !

THAT my first grief : but oh ! in after years  
 Were other deaths, that call'd for other tears. . . .  
 But here I dwell not—let me while I can,  
 Go to the Child, and lose the suffering Man.

## WILLIAM BLAKE

LXX

## THE PIPER

Piping down the valleys wild,  
 Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
 On a cloud I saw a child,  
 And he laughing said to me :—

‘ Pipe a song about a Lamb ! ’  
 So I piped with merry cheer.  
 ‘ Piper, pipe that song again ; ’  
 So I piped : he wept to hear.

‘ Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe ;  
 Sing thy songs of happy cheer : ’

So I sang the same again,  
While he wept with joy to hear.

'Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book, that all may read.'  
So he vanished from my sight,  
And I pluck'd a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,  
And I stain'd the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear.

## LXXI

*INFANT JOY*

'I have no name :  
I am but two days old.'  
What shall I call thee ?  
'I happy am,  
Joy is my name.'  
Sweet joy befall thee !

Pretty Joy !  
Sweet Joy, but two days old.  
Sweet Joy I call thee :  
Thou dost smile,  
I sing the while,  
Sweet joy befall thee !

## LXXII

*CRADLE SONG*

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,  
Dreaming in the joys of night :  
Sleep, sleep ; in thy sleep  
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face  
Soft desires I can trace,

Secret joys and secret smiles,  
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel  
Smiles as of the morning steal  
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast  
Where thy little heart doth rest.

O the cunning wiles that creep  
In thy little heart asleep !  
When thy little heart doth wake,  
Then the dreadful night shall break.

## LXXIII

## CRADLE SONG

Sweet dreams, form a shade  
O'er my lovely infant's head ;  
Sweet dreams of pleasant streams  
By happy, silent, moony beams.

Sweet sleep, with soft down  
Weave thy brows an infant crown.  
Sweet sleep, Angel mild,  
Hover o'er my happy child.

Sweet smiles, in the night  
Hover over my delight ;  
Sweet smiles, mother's smiles,  
All the livelong night beguiles. \*

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,  
Chase not slumber from thy eyes.  
Sweet moans, sweeter smiles,  
All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep, sleep, happy child,  
All creation slept and smil'd ;  
Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,  
While o'er thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face  
Holy image I can trace.

Sweet babe, once like thee,  
Thy Maker lay and wept for me,

Wept for me, for thee, for all  
When He was an infant small.  
Thou His image ever see,  
Heavenly face that smiles on thee,

Smiles on thee, on me, on all ;  
Who became an infant small.  
Infant smiles are His own smiles ;  
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

## LXXIV

## NURSE'S SONG

When the voices of children are heard on the green,  
And laughing is heard on the hill,  
My heart is at rest within my breast,  
And everything else is still.

' Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,  
And the dews of night arise ;  
Come, come, leave off play, and let us away  
Till the morning appears in the skies.'

' No, no, let us play, for it is yet day,  
And we cannot go to sleep ;  
Besides, in the sky the little birds fly,  
And the hills are all cover'd with sheep.'

' Well, well, go and play till the light fades away,  
And then go home to bed.'  
The little ones leapèd and shouted and laugh'd  
And all the hills echoèd.

*THE LITTLE BLACK BOY*

My mother bore me in the southern wild,  
 And I am black, but O ! my soul is white ;  
 White as an angel is the English child,  
 But I am black, as if bereav'd of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,  
 And, sitting down before the heat of day,  
 She took me on her lap and kissèd me,  
 And, pointing to the east, began to say :

' Look on the rising sun,—there God does live,  
 And gives His light, and gives His heat away ;  
 And flowers and trees and beasts and men  
     receive  
 Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

' And we are put on earth a little space,  
 That we may learn to bear the beams of love ;  
 And these black bodies and this sunburnt face  
     Is but a cloud, and like a shadÿ grove.

' For when our souls have learn'd the heat to  
     bear,  
 The cloud will vanish ; we shall hear His voice,  
 Saying : " Come out from the grove, My love  
     and care,  
 And round My golden tent like lambs rejoice." '

Thus did my mother say, and kissèd me ;  
 And thus I say to little English boy.  
 When I from black and he from white cloud  
     free,  
 And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear  
 To lean in joy upon our Father's knee ;  
 And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,  
 And be like him, and he will then love me.

## LXXVI

*HOLY THURSDAY*  
*(In Songs of Innocence)*

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces  
 clean,  
 The children walking two and two, in red and  
 blue and green.  
 Grey-headed beadles walk'd before, with wands as  
 white as snow,  
 Till into the high dome of Paul's they like  
 Thames' waters flow.

O what a multitude they seem'd, these flowers of  
 London town !  
 Seated in companies they sit with radiance all  
 their own.  
 The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes  
 of lambs,  
 Thousands of little boys and girls raising their  
 innocent hands.

Now like a mighty wind they raise to Heaven the  
 voice of song,  
 Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of  
 Heaven among.  
 Beneath them sit the agèd men, wise guardians of  
 the poor ;  
 Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from  
 your door.

## LXXVII

*HOLY THURSDAY*  
*(In Songs of Experience)*

Is this a holy thing to see  
 In a rich and fruitful land,  
 Babes reduc'd to misery,  
 Fed with cold and usurous hand ?

Is that trembling cry a song ?  
 Can it be a song of joy ?  
 And so many children poor ?  
 It is a land of poverty !

And their sun does never shine,  
 And their fields are bleak and bare,  
 And their ways are fill'd with thorns :  
 It is eternal winter there."

For where'er the sun does shine,  
 And where'er the rain does fall,  
 Babe can never hunger there,  
 Nor poverty the mind appal.

## LXXXVIII

*THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER*

When my mother died I was very young,  
 And my father sold me while yet my tongue  
 Could scarcely cry ' 'weep ! ' 'weep ! ' 'weep !  
 ' 'weep ! '

So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his  
 head,  
 That curl'd like a lamb's back, was shav'd : so  
 I said,  
 ' Hush, Tom ! never mind it, for when your  
 head's bare  
 You know that the soot cannot spoil your white  
 hair.'

And so he was quiet, and that very night,  
 As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight !—  
 That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and  
 Jack,  
 Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black.

And by came an Angel who had a bright key,  
 And he opened the coffins and set them all free ;

Then down a green plain leaping, laughing, they  
run,  
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,  
They rise upon clouds and sport in the wind ;  
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,  
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke ; and we rose in the dark,  
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.  
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy and  
warm ;  
So if all do their duty they need not fear harm.

## ROBERT BURNS

## LXXXIX

*THE COTTER'S HOME-COMING*

At length his lonely cot appears in view,  
Beneath the shelter of an agèd tree ;  
Th' expectant wee-things, toddlin, stacher thro'  
To meet their Dad, wi' flichterin noise an' glee.  
His wee bit ingle, blinking bonnily,  
His clean hearthstane, his thriftie wifie's smile,  
The lisping infant prattling on his knee,  
Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,  
An' makes him quite forget his labour an' his  
toil.

## SAMUEL ROGERS

## LXXX

*MEMORIES OF HIS CHILDHOOD'S  
HOME*

Now stained with dews, with cobwebs darkly hung,  
Oft has its roof with peals of rapture rung ;  
When round yon ample board, in due degree,

We sweetened every meal with social glee.  
 The heart's light laugh pursued the circling jest ;  
 And all was sunshine in each little breast.  
 'Twas here we chased the slipper by the sound ;  
 And turned the blindfold hero round and round.  
 'Twas here, at eve, we formed our fairy ring ;  
 And Fancy fluttered on her wildest wing.  
 Giants and genii chained each wondering ear ;  
 And orphan-sorrows drew the ready tear.  
 Oft with the babes we wandered in the wood,  
 Or viewed the forest-feats of Robin Hood :  
 Oft fancy-led, at midnight's fearful hour,  
 With startling step we scaled the lonely tower ;  
 O'er infant innocence to hang and weep,  
 Murdered by ruffian hands, when smiling in its  
 sleep.

Ye household deities ! whose guardian eye  
 Mark'd each pure thought, ere registered on high ;  
 Still, still ye walk the consecrated ground,  
 And breathe the soul of Inspiration round.

## MARY LAMB

LXXXI

*IN MEMORIAM*

A child's a plaything for an hour ;  
 Its pretty tricks we try  
 For that or for a longer space ;—  
 Then tire, and lay it by.

But I knew one that to itself  
 All seasons could control ;  
 That would have mock'd the sense of pain  
 Out of a grievèd soul.

Thou straggler into loving arms,  
 Young climber-up of knees,  
 When I forget thy thousand ways  
 Then life and all shall cease !

## ROBERT BLOOMFIELD

LXXXII

*THE BLIND CHILD*

Where's the blind child, so admirably fair,  
With guileless dimples, and with flaxen hair  
That waves in every breeze ? He's often seen  
Beside yon cottage wall, or on the green,  
With others matched in spirit and in size,  
Health on their cheeks and rapture in their  
eyes.

That full expanse of voice to childhood dear,  
Soul of their sports, is duly cherished here :  
And hark, that laugh is his, that jovial cry ;  
He hears the ball and trundling hoop brush by,  
And runs the giddy course with all his might,  
A very child in everything but sight ;  
With circumscribed, but not abated powers,  
Play, the great object of his infant hours.  
In many a game he takes a noisy part,  
And shows the native gladness of his heart ;  
But soon he hears, on pleasure all intent,  
The new suggestion and the quick assent ;  
The grove invites, delight thrills every breast—  
To leap the ditch, and seek the downy nest,  
Away they start ; leave balls and hoops behind,  
And one companion leave—the boy is blind !  
His fancy paints their distant paths so gay,  
That childish fortitude awhile gives way :  
He feels his dreadful loss ; yet short the pain,  
Soon he resumes his cheerfulness again,  
Pondering how best his moments to employ  
He sings his little songs of nameless joy ;  
Creeps on the warm green turf for many an hour,  
And plucks by chance the white and yellow  
flower ;  
Smoothing their stems while, resting on his knees,  
He binds a nosegay which he never sees ;

Along the homeward path then feels his way,  
Lifting his brow against the shining day,  
And with a playful rapture round his eyes  
Presents a sighing parent with the prize.

JAMES HOGG

LXXXIII

*A BOY'S SONG*

Where the pools are bright and deep,  
Where the grey trout lies asleep,  
Up the river and over the lea,  
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,  
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,  
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,  
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,  
Where the hay lies thick and greenest ;  
There to track the homeward bee,  
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,  
Where the shadow falls the deepest,  
Where the clustering nuts fall free,  
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away  
Little sweet maidens from the play,  
Or love to banter and fight so well,  
That's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play,  
Through the meadow, among the hay ;  
Up the water and over the lea,  
That's the way for Billy and me.

## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

LXXXIV

*CHARACTER OF A CHILD THREE  
YEARS OLD*

Loving she is, and tractable, though wild ;  
 And Innocence hath privilege in her  
 To dignify arch looks and laughing eyes ;  
 And feats of cunning ; and the pretty round  
 Of trespasses, affected to provoke  
 Mock-chastisement and partnership in play.  
 And, as a faggot sparkles on the hearth,  
 Not less if unattended and alone  
 Than when both young and old sit gathered  
 round  
 And take delight in its activity ;  
 Even so this happy Creature of herself  
 Is all-sufficient, solitude to her  
 Is blithe society, who fills the air  
 With gladness and involuntary songs.  
 Light are her sallies as the tripping fawn's  
 Forth-startled from the fern where she lay  
 couched ;  
 Unthought-of, unexpected, as the stir  
 Of the soft breeze ruffling the meadow-flowers,  
 Or from before it chasing wantonly  
 The many-coloured images imprest  
 Upon the bosom of a placid lake.

LXXXV

*LUCY GRAY  
or, Solitude*

Oft I had heard of Lucy Gray :  
 And, when I crossed the wild,  
 I chanced to see at break of day  
 The solitary child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ;  
She dwelt on a wide moor,  
—The sweetest thing that ever grew  
Beside a human door !

You yet may spy the fawn at play,  
The hare upon the green ;  
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray  
Will never more be seen.

‘ To-night will be a stormy night—  
You to the town must go ;  
And take a lantern, Child, to light  
Your mother through the snow.’

‘ That, Father ! will I gladly do :  
’Tis scarcely afternoon—  
The minster-clock has just struck two,  
And yonder is the moon ! ’

At this the Father raised his hook,  
And snapped a faggot-band ;  
He plied his work ;—and Lucy took  
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :  
With many a wanton stroke  
Her feet disperse the powdery snow,  
That rises up like smoke.

The storm came on before its time :  
She wandered up and down ;  
And many a hill did Lucy climb :  
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night  
Went shouting far and wide ;  
But there was neither sound nor sight  
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood  
That overlooked the moor ;  
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,  
A furlong from their door.

They wept—and, turning homeward, cried,  
 ‘ In heaven we all shall meet ; ’  
 —When in the snow the mother spied  
 The print of Lucy’s feet.

Then downwards from the steep hill’s edge  
 They tracked the footmarks small ;  
 And through the broken hawthorn hedge,  
 And by the long stone-wall ;

And then an open field they crossed :  
 The marks were still the same ;  
 They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;  
 And to the bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank  
 Those footmarks, one by one,  
 Into the middle of the plank ;  
 And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day  
 She is a living child ;  
 That you may see sweet Lucy Gray  
 Upon the lonesome wild.

O’er rough and smooth she trips along,  
 And never looks behind ;  
 And sings a solitary song  
 That whistles in the wind.

## LXXXVI

## WE ARE SEVEN

— A simple Child,  
 That lightly draws its breath,  
 And feels its life in every limb,  
 What should it know of death ?

I met a little cottage Girl :  
 She was eight years old, she said ;  
 Her hair was thick with many a curl  
 That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,  
And she was wildly clad :  
Her eyes were fair, and very fair ;  
—Her beauty made me glad.

‘ Sisters and brothers, little Maid,  
How many may you be ? ’  
‘ How many ? Seven in all,’ she said  
And wondering looked at me. ‘

‘ And where are they ? I pray you tell.’  
She answered, ‘ Seven are we ;  
And two of us at Conway dwell.  
And two are gone to sea.

‘ Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
My sister and my brother ;  
And, in the church-yard cottage, I  
Dwell near them with my mother.’

‘ You say that two at Conway dwell,  
And two are gone to sea,  
Yet ye are seven !—I pray you tell,  
Sweet Maid, how this may be.’

Then did the little Maid reply,  
‘ Seven boys and girls are we ;  
Two of us in the church-yard lie,  
Beneath the church-yard tree.’

‘ You run about, my little Maid,  
Your limbs they are alive ;  
If two are in the church-yard laid,  
Then ye are only five.’

‘ Their graves are green they may be seen,  
The little Maid replied,  
‘ Twelve steps or more from my mother’s door,  
And they are side by side.

‘ My stockings there I often knit,  
My kerchief there I hem ;  
And there upon the ground I sit,  
And sing a song to them.

‘ And often after sunset, Sir,  
 When it is light and fair,  
 I take my little porringer,  
 And eat my supper there.

‘ The first that died was sister Jane ;  
 In bed she moaning lay,  
 Till God released her of her pain ;  
 And then she went away.

‘ So in the church-yard she was laid ;  
 And, when the grass was dry,  
 Together round her grave we played,  
 My brother John and I.

‘ And when the ground was white with snow,  
 And I could run and slide,  
 My brother John was forced to go,  
 And he lies by her side.’

‘ How many are you, then,’ said I,  
 ‘ If they two are in heaven ? ’  
 Quick was the little Maid’s reply,  
 ‘ O Master ! we are seven.’

‘ But they are dead ; those two are dead !  
 Their spirits are in heaven ! ’  
 ‘ Twas throwing words away ; for still  
 The little Maid would have her will,  
 And said, ‘ Nay, we are seven ! ’

## LXXXVII

*TO H(ARTLEY) C(OLERIDGE)*  
*Six Years Old*

O thou ! whose fancies from afar are brought ;  
 Who of thy words dost make a mock apparel,  
 And fittest to unutterable thought  
 The breeze-like motion and the self-born carol ;  
 Thou faery voyager ! that dost float  
 In such clear water, that thy boat

May rather seem  
 To brood on air than on an earthly stream ;  
 Suspended in a stream as clear as sky,  
 Where earth and heaven do make one imagery  
 O blessed vision ! happy child !  
 Thou art so exquisitely wild,  
 I think of thee with many fears  
 For what may be thy lot in future years.

I thought of times when Pain might be thy guest,  
 Lord of thy house and hospitality ;  
 And Grief, uneasy lover ! never rest  
 But when she sate within the touch of thee.  
 O too industrious folly !  
 O vain and causeless melancholy !  
 Nature will either end thee quite ;  
 Or, lengthening out thy season of delight,  
 Preserve for thee, by individual right,  
 A young lamb's heart among the full-grown flocks.  
 What hast thou to do with sorrow,  
 Or the injuries of to-morrow ?  
 Thou art a dew-drop, which the morn brings forth,  
 Ill fitted to sustain unkindly shocks,  
 Or to be trailed along the soiling earth ;  
 A gem that glitters while it lives,  
 And no forewarning gives ;  
 But, at the touch of wrong, without a strife  
 Slips in a moment out of life.

## LXXXVIII

*THE CHILD AND THE SHELL*

I have seen  
 A curious child, who dwelt upon a tract  
 Of inland ground, applying to his ear  
 The convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell ;  
 To which, in silence hushed, his very soul  
 Listened intensely ; and his countenance soon  
 Brightened with joy ; for from within were heard

Murmurings, whereby the monitor expressed  
 Mysterious union with its native sea.  
 Even such a shell the universe itself  
 Is to the ear of Faith.

## LXXXIX

*THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES*

That way look, my Infant, lo !  
 What a pretty baby-show !  
 See the Kitten on the wall,  
 Sporting with the leaves that fall,  
 Withered leaves—one—two—and three—  
 From the lofty elder-tree !  
 Through the calm and frosty air  
 Of this morning bright and fair,  
 Eddying round and round they sink  
 Softly, slowly : one might think,  
 From the motions that are made,  
 Every little leaf conveyed  
 Sylph or Faery hither tending,—  
 To this lower world descending,  
 Each invisible and mute,  
 In his wavering parachute. . . .

Such a light of gladness breaks,  
 Pretty Kitten ! from thy freaks,—  
 Spreads with such a living grace  
 O'er my little Dora's face ;  
 Yes, the sight so stirs and charms  
 Thee, Baby, laughing in my arms,  
 That almost I could repine  
 That your transports are not mine,  
 That I do not wholly fare  
 Even as ye do, thoughtless pair !  
 And I will have my careless season  
 Spite of melancholy reason,  
 Will walk through life in such a way  
 That, when time brings on decay,  
 Now and then I may possess

Hours of perfect gladsomeness.  
—Pleased by any random toy ;  
By a kitten's busy joy,  
Or an infant's laughing eye  
Sharing in the ecstasy ;  
I would fare like that or this,  
Find my wisdom in my bliss ;  
Keep the sprightly soul awake,  
And have faculties to take,  
Even from things by sorrow wrought,  
Matter for a jocund thought,  
Spite of care, and spite of grief,  
To gambol with Life's falling leaf.

## xc

*THERE WAS A BOY*

There was a Boy : ye knew him well, ye cliffs  
And islands of Winander !—many a time  
At evening, when the earliest stars began  
To move along the edges of the hills,  
Rising or setting, would he stand alone  
Beneath the trees or by the glimmering lake ;  
And there, with fingers interwoven, both hands  
Pressed closely palm to palm and to his mouth  
Uplifted, he, as through an instrument,  
Blew mimic hootings to the silent owls,  
That they might answer him.—And they would  
shout

Across the watery vale, and shout again,  
Responsive to his call—with quivering peals,  
And long halloos and screams, and echoes loud,  
Redoubled and redoubled, concourse wild  
Of jocund din ! And, when there came a pause  
Of silence such as baffled his best skill :  
Then, sometimes, in that silence, while he hung  
Listening, a gentle shock of mild surprise  
Has carried far into his heart the voice  
Of mountain torrents ; or the visible scene  
Would enter unawares into his mind,

With all its solemn imagery, its rocks,  
Its woods, and that uncertain heaven, received  
Into the bosom of the steady lake.

This boy was taken from his mates, and died  
In childhood, ere he was full twelve years old.  
Pre-eminent in beauty is the vale  
Where he was born and bred : the church-yard  
hangs  
Upon a slope above the village school ;  
And, through that church-yard when my way  
has led  
On summer evenings, I believe, that there  
A long half-hour together I have stood  
Mute—looking at the grave in which he lies !

## XCI

*THE BOY IN THE MILL*

The boy, where'er he turns,  
Is still a prisoner ; when the wind is up  
Among the clouds, and roars through the ancient  
woods ;  
Or when the sun is shining in the east,  
Quiet and calm. Behold him—in the school ;  
Of his attainments ? no ; but with the air  
Fanning his temples under heaven's blue arch.  
His raiment, whitened o'er with cotton-flakes  
Or locks of wool, announces whence he comes.  
Creeping his gait and cowering, his lip pale,  
His respiration quick and audible ;  
And scarcely could you fancy that a gleam  
Could break from out those languid eyes, or a  
blush  
Mantle upon his cheek. Is this the form,  
Is that the countenance, and such the port,  
Of no mean Being ? One who should be clothed  
With dignity befitting his proud hope ;  
Who, in his very childhood, should appear  
Sublime from present purity and joy !

The limbs increase ; but liberty of mind  
 Is gone for ever ; and this organic frame,  
 So joyful in its motions, is become  
 Dull, to the joy of her own motions dead ;  
 And even the touch, so exquisitely poured  
 Through the whole body, with a languid will  
 Performs its functions ; rarely competent  
 To impress a vivid feeling on the mind  
 Of what there is delightful in the 'breeze,  
 The gentle visitations of the sun,  
 Or lapse of liquid element—by hand,  
 Or foot, or lip, in summer's warmth—perceived.  
 —Can hope look forward to a manhood raised  
 On such foundations ?

## XCII

*THE EDUCATION OF NATURE*

Three years she grew in sun and shower,  
 Then Nature said, ' A lovelier flower  
 On earth was never sown ;  
 This Child I to myself will take ;  
 She shall be mine, and I will make  
 A Lady of my own.

' Myself will to my darling be  
 Both law and impulse : and with me  
 The Girl, in rock and plain,  
 In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
 Shall feel an overseeing power  
 To kindle or restrain.

' She shall be sportive as the fawn  
 That wild with glee across the lawn,  
 Or up the mountain springs ;  
 And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
 And hers the silence and the calm  
 Of mute insensate things.

' The floating clouds their state shall lend  
 To her ; for her the willow bend ;

Nor shall she fail to see  
 Even in the motions of the Storm  
 Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form  
 By silent sympathy.

' The stars of midnight shall be dear  
 To her ; and she shall lean her ear  
 In many a secret place  
 Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
 And beauty born of murmuring sound  
 Shall pass into her face.

' And vital feelings of delight  
 Shall rear her form to stately height,  
 Her virgin bosom swell ;  
 Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
 While she and I together live  
 Here in this happy dell.'

Thus Nature spake—The work was done—  
 How soon my Lucy's race was run !  
 She died, and left to me  
 This heath, this calm, and quiet scene ;  
 The memory of what has been,  
 And never more will be.

## XCIII

*IT IS A BEAUTEOUS EVENING,  
 CALM AND FREE*

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free,  
 The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
 Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun  
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;  
 The gentleness of heaven broods o'er the Sea :  
 Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,  
 And doth with his eternal motion make  
 A sound like thunder—everlastingly.  
 Dear Child ! dear Girl ! that walkest with me  
     here,  
 If thou appear untouched by solemn thought,

Thy nature is not therefore less divine :  
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;  
 And worship'st at the Temple's inner shrine,  
 God being with thee when we know it not.

## XCIV

*CATECHISING*

From Little down to Least, in due degree,  
 Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought vest,  
 Each with a vernal posy at his breast,  
 We stood, a trembling, earnest Company !  
 With low soft murmur, like a distant bee,  
 Some spake, by thought-perplexing fears be-  
     trayed ;  
 And some a bold unerring answer made :  
 How fluttered then thy anxious heart for me,  
 Belovèd Mother ! Thou whose happy hand  
 Had bound the flowers I wore, with faithful tie :  
 Sweet flowers ! at whose inaudible command  
 Her countenance, phantom-like, doth reappear :  
 O lost too early for the frequent tear,  
 And ill requited by this heartfelt sigh !

## XCV

*SURPRISED BY JOY—IMPATIENT  
AS THE WIND*

Surprised by joy—impatient as the Wind  
 I turned to share the transport—Oh ! with  
     whom  
 But Thee, deep buried in the silent tomb,  
 That spot which no vicissitude can find ?  
 Love, faithful love, recalled thee to my mind—  
 But how could I forget thee ? Through what  
     power,  
 Even for the least division of an hour,  
 Have I been so beguiled as to be blind

To my most grievous loss ?—That thought's return  
 Was the worst pang that sorrow ever bore,  
 Save one, one only, when I stood forlorn,  
 Knowing my heart's best treasure was no more ;  
 That neither present time, nor years unborn  
 Could to my sight that heavenly face restore.

## xcvi

*THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS*

We walked along, while bright and red  
 Uprose the morning sun ;  
 And Matthew stopped, he looked, and said,  
 ‘ The will of God be done ! ’

A village schoolmaster was he,  
 With hair of glittering grey ;  
 As blithe a man as you could see  
 On a spring holiday.

And on that morning, through the grass,  
 And by the steaming rills,  
 We travelled merrily, to pass  
 A day among the hills.

‘ Our work,’ said I, ‘ was well begun,  
 Then, from thy breast what thought,  
 Beneath so beautiful a sun,  
 So sad a sigh has brought ? ’

A second time did Matthew stop ;  
 And fixing still his eye  
 Upon the eastern mountain-top,  
 To me he made reply :

‘ Yon cloud with that long purple cleft  
 Brings fresh into my mind  
 A day like this which I have left  
 Full thirty years behind..

‘ And just above yon slope of corn  
Such colours, and no other,  
Were in the sky, that April morn,  
Of this the very brother.

‘ With rod and line I sued the sport  
Which that sweet season gave,  
And, to the church-yard come, stopped short  
Beside my daughter’s grave.

‘ Nine summers had she scarcely seen,  
The pride of all the vale ;  
And then she sang ;—she would have been  
A very nightingale.

‘ Six feet in earth my Emma lay ;  
And yet I loved her more,  
For so it seemed, than till that day  
I e’er had loved before.

‘ And, turning from her grave, I met,  
Beside the church-yard yew,  
A blooming Girl, whose hair was wet  
With points of morning dew.

‘ A basket on her head she bare ;  
Her brow was smooth and white :  
To see a child so very fair,  
It was a pure delight !

‘ No fountain from its rocky cave  
E’er tripped with foot so free ;  
She seemed as happy as a wave  
That dances on the sea.

‘ There came from me a sigh of pain  
Which I could ill confine ;  
I looked at her, and looked again :  
And did not wish her mine ! ’

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,  
Methinks, I see him stand,  
As at that moment, with a bough  
Of wilding in his hand.

## XCVII

*From THE PRELUDE—‘ FAIR SEED-TIME HAD MY SOUL ’*

## I

. . . One, the fairest of all rivers, loved  
To blend his murmurs with my nurse’s song,  
And, from his alder shades and rocky falls,  
And from his fords and shallows, sent a voice  
That flowed along my dreams. For this, didst thou,

O Derwent ! winding among grassy holms  
Where I was looking on, a babe in arms,  
Make ceaseless music that composed my thoughts  
To more than infant softness, giving me  
Amid the fretful dwellings of mankind  
A foretaste, a dim earnest, of the calm  
That Nature breathes among the hills and groves.

## II

Oh, many a time have I, a five years’ child,  
In a small mill-race severed from his stream,  
Made one long bathing of a summer’s day ;  
Basked in the sun, and plunged and basked again  
Alternate, all a summer’s day, or scoured  
The sandy fields, leaping through flowery groves  
Of yellow ragwort ; or, when rock and hill,  
The woods, and distant Skiddaw’s lofty height,  
Were bronzed with deepest radiance, stood alone  
Beneath the sky, as if I had been born  
On Indian plains, and from my mother’s hut  
Had run abroad in wantonness, to sport  
A naked savage, in the thunder shower.

## III

Fair seed-time had my soul, and I grew up  
Fostered alike by beauty and by fear :  
Much favoured in my birth-place, and no less  
In that belovèd Vale to which ere long

We were transplanted ;—there were we let loose  
For sports of wider range. Ere I had told  
Ten birth-days, when among the mountain slopes  
Frost, and the breath of frosty wind, had  
snapped

The last autumnal crocus, 'twas my joy  
With store of springes o'er my shoulder hung  
To range the open heights where woodcocks run  
Along the smooth green turf. Through half the  
night,

Scudding away from snare to snare, I plied  
That anxious visitation ;—moon and stars  
Were shining o'er my head. I was alone,  
And seemed to be a trouble to the peace  
That dwelt among them. Sometimes it befell  
In these night wanderings, that a strong desire  
O'erpowered my better reason, and the bird  
Which was the captive of another's toil  
Became my prey ; and when the deed was done  
I heard among the solitary hills  
Low breathings coming after me, and sounds  
Of undistinguishable motion, steps  
Almost as silent as the turf they trod.

Nor less, when spring had warmed the cultured  
Vale,

Moved we as plunderers where the mother-bird  
Had in high places built her lodge ; though mean  
Our object and inglorious, yet the end  
Was not ignoble. Oh ! when I have hung  
Above the raven's nest, by knots of grass  
And half-inch fissures in the slippery rock  
But ill sustained, and almost (so it seemed)  
Suspended by the blast that blew amain,  
Shouldering the naked crag, oh, at that time  
While on the perilous ridge I hung alone,  
With what strange utterance did the loud dry  
wind

Blow through my ear ! the sky seemed not a sky  
Of earth—and with what motion moved the  
clouds !

## IV

One summer evening (led by her) I found  
A little boat tied to a willow tree  
Within a rocky cave, its usual home.  
Straight I unloosed her chain, and stepping in  
Pushed from the shore. It was an act of stealth  
And troubled pleasure, nor without the voice  
Of mountain-echoes did my boat move on ;  
Leaving behind her still, on either side,  
Small circles glittering idly in the moon,  
Until they melted all into one track  
Of sparkling light. But now, like one who rows,  
Proud of his skill, to reach a chosen point  
With an unswerving line, I fixed my view  
Upon the summit of a craggy ridge,  
The horizon's utmost boundary ; far above  
Was nothing but the stars and the grey sky.  
She was an elfin pinnace ; lustily  
I dipped my oars into the silent lake,  
And, as I rose upon the stroke, my boat  
Went heaving through the water like a swan ;  
When, from behind that craggy steep till then  
The horizon's bound, a huge peak, black and huge  
As if with voluntary power instinct,  
Upreared its head. I struck and struck again,  
And growing still in stature the grim shape  
Tower'd up between me and the stars, and still,  
For so it seemed, with purpose of its own  
And measured motion like a living thing,  
Strode after me. With trembling oars I turned,  
And through the silent water stole my way  
Back to the covert of the willow tree ;—  
There in her mooring-place I left my bark,—  
And through the meadows homeward went, in  
grave  
And serious mood ; but after I had seen  
That spectacle, for many days, my brain  
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense  
Of unknown modes of being ; o'er my thoughts

There hung a darkness, call it solitude  
Or blank desertion. No familiar shapes  
Remained, no pleasant images of trees,  
Of sea or sky, no colours of green fields ;  
But huge and mighty forms, that do not live  
Like living men, moved slowly through the mind  
By day, and were a trouble to my dreams.

## v

And in the frosty season, when the sun  
Was set, and visible for many a mile  
The cottage windows blazed through twilight  
gloom,  
I heeded not their summons : happy time  
It was indeed for all of us—for me  
It was a time of rapture ! Clear and loud  
The village clock tolled six,—I wheeled about,  
Proud and exulting like an untired horse  
That cares not for his home. All shod with  
steel,  
We hissed along the polished ice in games  
Confederate, imitative of the chase  
And woodland pleasures,—the resounding horn,  
The pack loud chiming, and the hunted hare.  
So through the darkness and the cold we flew,  
And not a voice was idle ; with the din  
Sinitten, the precipices rang aloud ;  
The leafless trees and every icy crag  
Tinkled like iron ; while far distant hills  
Into the tumult sent an alien sound  
Of melancholy not unnoticed, while the stars  
Eastward were sparkling clear, and in the west  
The orange sky of evening died away.  
Not seldom from the uproar I retired  
Into a silent bay, or sportively  
Glanced sideway, leaving the tumultuous throng,  
To cut across the reflex of a star  
That fled, and, flying still before me, gleamed  
Upon the glassy plain ; and oftentimes,  
When we had given our bodies to the wind,  
And all the shadowy banks on either side

Came sweeping through the darkness, spinning  
still

The rapid line of motion, then at once  
Have I, reclining back upon my heels,  
Stopped short ; yet still the solitary cliffs  
Wheeled by me—even as if the earth had rolled  
With visible motion her diurnal round !  
Behind me did they stretch in solemn train,  
Feebler and feeblower, and I stood and watched  
Till all was tranquil as a dreamless sleep.

## VI

Yes, I remember when the changeful earth,  
And twice five summers on my mind had stamped  
The faces of the moving year, even then  
I held unconscious intercourse with beauty  
Old as creation, drinking in a pure  
Organic pleasure from the silver wreaths  
Of curling mist, or from the level plain  
Of waters coloured by impending clouds.

## VII

Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy  
Which, through all seasons, on a child's pursuits  
Are prompt attendants, 'mid that giddy bliss  
Which, like a tempest, works along the blood  
And is forgotten ; even then I felt  
Gleams like the flashing of a shield ;—the earth  
And common face of Nature spake to me  
Rememberable things.

## XCVIII

*ODE ON THE INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD*

## I

There was a time when meadow, grove, and  
stream,

The earth, and every common sight,  
     To me did seem  
         Apparelled in celestial light,  
     The glory and the freshness of a dream.  
     It is not now as it hath been of yore ;—  
         Turn wheresoe'er I may,  
             By night or day,  
     The things which I have seen I now can see no  
         more.

## II

The Rainbow comes and goes,  
     And lovely is the Rose,  
         The Moon doth with delight  
     Look round her when the heavens are bare,  
         Waters on a starry night  
             Are beautiful and fair ;  
     The sunshine is a glorious birth ;  
         But yet I know, where'er I go,  
     That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

## III

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,  
     And while the young lambs bound  
         As to the tabor's sound,  
     To me alone there came a thought of grief ;  
         A timely utterance gave that thought relief,  
             And I again am strong :  
     The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep ;  
     No more shall grief of mine the season wrong ;  
     I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,  
     The Winds come to me from the fields of sleep,  
         And all the earth is gay ;  
             Land and sea  
     Give themselves up to jollity,  
         And with the heart of May  
     Doth every Beast keep holiday ;—  
         Thou Child of Joy,  
     Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou  
         happy  
             Shepherd-boy !

## IV

Ye blessed Creatures, I have heard the call  
 Ye to each other make ; I see  
 The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;  
 My heart is at your festival,  
 My head hath its coronal,  
 The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.  
 Oh evil day ! if I were sullen  
 While Earth herself is adorning,  
 This sweet May-morning,  
 And the Children are culling  
 On every side,  
 In a thousand valleys far and wide,  
 Fresh flowers ; while the sun shines warm,  
 And the Babe leaps up on his Mother's arm :—  
 I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !  
 —But there's a Tree, of many, one,  
 A single Field which I have looked upon,  
 Both of them speak of something that is gone :  
 The Pansy at my feet  
 Doth the same tale repeat :  
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?  
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

## V

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :  
 The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,  
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,  
 And cometh from afar :  
 Not in entire forgetfulness,  
 And not in utter nakedness,  
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
 From God, who is our home :  
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy !  
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close  
 Upon the growing Boy,  
 But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,  
 He sees it in his joy ;  
 The Youth, who daily farther from the east

Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,  
And by the vision splendid  
Is on his way attended ;  
At length the Man perceives it die away,  
And fade into the light of common day.

## VI

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;  
Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,  
And, even with something of a Mother's mind,  
    And no unworthy aim,  
The homely Nurse doth all she can  
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,  
    Forget the glories he hath known,  
And that imperial palace whence he came.

## VII

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,  
A six-years' Darling of a pigmy size !  
See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,  
Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,  
With light upon him from his father's eyes !  
See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,  
Some fragment from his dream of human life,  
Shaped by himself with newly-learnèd art ;  
    A wedding or a festival,  
    A mourning or a funeral ;  
        And this hath now his heart,  
    And unto this he frames his song :  
        Then will he fit his tongue  
To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;  
        But it will not be long  
        Ere this be thrown aside,  
        And with new joy and pride  
The little Actor cons another part ;  
Filling from time to time his 'humorous stage'  
With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,  
That Life brings with her in her equipage ;  
    As if his whole vocation  
    Were endless imitation.

## VIII

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie  
 Thy Soul's immensity ;  
 Thou best Philosopher, who yet dost keep  
 Thy heritage, thou Eye among the blind,  
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,  
 Haunted for ever by the eternal mind,—  
 Mighty Prophet ! Seer blest !  
 On whom those truths do rest,  
 Which we are toiling all our lives to find,  
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;  
 Thou, over whom thy Immortality  
 Broods like the Day, a Master o'er a Slave,  
 A Presence which is not to be put by ;  
 Thou little Child, yet glorious in the might  
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,  
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke  
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,  
 Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife ?  
 Full soon thy Soul shall have her earthly freight,  
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,  
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

## IX

O joy ! that in our embers  
 Is something that doth live,  
 That nature yet remembers  
 What was so fugitive !  
 The thought of our past years in me doth breed  
 Perpetual benediction : not indeed  
 For that which is most worthy to be blest—  
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed  
 Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,  
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his  
 breast :—  
 Not for these I raise  
 The song of thanks and praise ;  
 But for those obstinate questionings  
 Of sense and outward things,

Fallings from us, vanishings ;  
 Blank misgivings of a Creature  
 Moving about in worlds not realised,  
 High instincts before which our mortal Nature  
 Did tremble like a guilty Thing surprised :  
 But for those first affections,  
 Those shadowy recollections,  
 Which, be they what they may,  
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,  
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;  
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to  
     make  
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being  
 Of the eternal Silence : truths that wake,  
     To perish never ;  
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavour,  
     Nor Man nor Boy,  
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,  
 Can utterly abolish or destroy !  
 Hence in a season of calm weather  
 Though inland far we be,  
 Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea  
     Which brought us hither,  
     Can in a moment travel thither,  
 And see the Children sport upon the shore,  
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

## x

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song !  
 And let the young Lambs bound  
     As to the tabor's sound !  
 We in thought will join your throng,  
     Ye that pipe and ye that play,  
     Ye that through your hearts to-day  
     Feel the gladness of the May !  
 What though the radiance which was once so  
     bright  
 Be now for ever taken from my sight,  
     Though nothing can bring back the hour  
 Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower ;  
     We will grieve not, rather find

Strength in what remains behind ;  
 In the primal sympathy  
 Which having been must ever be ;  
 In the soothing thoughts that spring  
 Out of human suffering ;  
 In the faith that looks through death,  
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

## xi

And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and Groves,  
 Forebode not any severing of our loves !  
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might ;  
 I only have relinquished one delight  
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.  
 I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,  
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;  
 The innocent brightness of a new-born Day  
 Is lovely yet ;  
 The Clouds that gather round the setting sun  
 Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;  
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.  
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,  
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

## xcix

*MY HEART LEAPS UP WHEN  
 I BEHOLD*

My heart leaps up when I behold  
 A rainbow in the sky :  
 So was it when my life began ;  
 So is it now I am a man ;

So be it when I shall grow old,  
 Or let me die !  
 The Child is father of the Man ;  
 And I could wish my days to be  
 Bound each by each by natural piety.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

C

*ULLABY OF AN INFANT CHIEF*

O, hush thee, my babie, thy sire was a knight,  
 Thy mother a lady, both lovely and bright ;  
 The woods and the glens, from the towers which  
 we see,  
 They all are belonging, dear babie, to thee.  
 O ho ro, i ri ri, cadul gu lo,  
 O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

O, fear not the bugle, though loudly it blows,  
 It calls but the warders that guard thy repose ;  
 Their bows would be bended, their blades would  
 be red,  
 Ere the step of a foeman draws near to thy bed.  
 O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

O, hush thee, my babie, the time soon will  
 come  
 When thy sleep shall be broken by trumpet and  
 drum ;  
 Then hush thee, my darling, take rest while you  
 may,  
 For strife comes with manhood, and waking  
 with day.  
 O ho ro, i ri ri, etc.

CI

*NOVEMBER*

The sheep, before the pinching heaven,  
 To shelter'd dale and down are driven,

G

Where yet some faded herbage pines,  
 And yet a watery sunbeam shines ;  
 In meek despondency they eye  
 The wither'd sward and wintry sky,  
 And far beneath their summer hill,  
 Stray sadly by Glenkinnon's rill :  
 The shepherd shifts his mantle's fold,  
 And wraps him closer from the cold ;  
 His dogs no merry circles wheel,  
 But, shivering, follow at his heel ;  
 A cowering glance they often cast,  
 As deeper moans the gathering blast.

My imps, though hardy, bold, and wild,  
 As best befits the mountain child,  
 Feel the sad influence of the hour,  
 And wail the daisy's vanished flower ;  
 Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,  
 And anxious ask,—Will spring return,  
 And birds and lambs again be gay,  
 And blossoms clothe the hawthorn spray ?

Yes, prattlers, yes. The daisy's flower  
 Again shall paint your summer bower ;  
 Again the hawthorn shall supply  
 The garlands you delight to tie ;  
 The lambs upon the lea shall bound,  
 The wild birds carol to the round,  
 And while you frolic light as they,  
 Too short shall seem the summer day.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

CII

*A LITTLE CHILD*

A lit'tle child, a limber elf,  
 Singing, dancing to itself,  
 A fairy thing with red round cheeks,  
 That always finds and never seeks,  
 Makes such a vision to the sight  
 As fills a father's eyes with light. . . .

## CIII

*TO THE RIVER OTTER*

Dear native brook ! wild streamlet of the West !  
 How many various-fated years have passed,  
 What happy, and what mournful hours, since last  
 I skimmed the smooth thin stone along thy breast,  
 Numbering its light leaps ! Yet so deep imprest  
 Sink the sweet scenes of childhood, that mine eyes  
 I never shut amid the sunny ray,  
 But straight with all their tints thy waters rise,  
 Thy crossing plank, thy marge with willows gray,  
 And bedded sand that, veined with various dyes,  
 Gleamed through thy bright transparency. On  
 my way,  
 Visions of childhood ! oft have ye beguiled  
 Lone manhood's cares, yet waking fondest sighs :  
 Ah ! that once more I were a careless child.

## CIV

*LOVE, HOPE, AND PATIENCE IN  
EDUCATION*

O'er wayward childhood would'st thou hold firm  
 rule,  
 And sun thee in the light of happy faces ;  
 Love, Hope, and Patience, these must be thy  
 graces,  
 And in thine own heart let them first keep school.  
 For as old Atlas on his broad neck places  
 Heaven's starry globe, and there sustains it ;—so  
 Do these upbear the little world below  
 Of Education,—Patience, Love, and Hope.  
 Methinks, I see them group'd in seemly show,  
 The straiten'd arms upraised, the palms aslope,  
 And robes that, touching as adown they flow,  
 Distinctly blend, like snow emboss'd in snow.

O part them never ! If Hope prostrate lie,  
     Love too will sink and die.  
 But Love is subtle, and doth proof derive  
 From her own life that Hope is yet alive ;  
 And bending o'er, with soul-transfusing eyes,  
 And the soft murmurs of the mother dove,  
 Woos back the fleeting spirit, and half supplies ;—  
 Thus Love repays to Hope what Hope first gave  
     to Love.  
 Yet haply there will come a weary day,  
     When overtask'd at length  
 Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way.  
 Then with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,  
 Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth,  
 And both supporting does the work of both.

## cv

*From 'FROST AT MIDNIGHT'*

Dear Babe, that sleepest cradled by my side,  
 Whose gentle breathings, heard in this deep calm  
 Fill up the interspersèd vacancies  
 And momentary pauses of the thought !  
 My babe so beautiful ! it thrills my heart  
 With tender gladness, thus to look at thee,  
 And think that thou shalt learn far other lore,  
 And in far other scenes ! For I was reared  
 In the great city, pent 'mid cloisters dim,  
 And saw nought lovely but the sky and stars.  
 But *thou*, my babe ! shalt wander like a breeze  
 By lakes and sandy shores, beneath the crags  
 Of ancient mountain, and beneath the clouds,  
 Which image in their bulk both lakes and shores  
 And mountain crags : so shalt thou see and hear  
 The lovely shapes and sounds intelligible  
 Of that eternal language, which thy God  
 Utters, who from eternity doth teach  
 Himself in all, and all things in Himself.  
 Great universal Teacher ! He shall mould  
 Thy spirit, and by giving make it ask.

Therefore all seasons shall be sweet to thee,  
 Whether the summer clothe the general earth  
 With greenness, or the redbreast sit and sing  
 Betwixt the tufts of snow on the bare branch  
 Of mossy apple-tree, while the nigh thatch  
 Smokes in the sun-thaw ; whether the eave-drops  
 fall

Heard only in the trances of the blast,  
 Or if the secret ministry of frost  
 Shall hang them up in silent icicles,  
 Quietly shining to the quiet Moon.

## CVI

*TIME, REAL AND IMAGINARY*  
*(An Allegory)*

On the wide level of a mountain's head,  
 (I knew not where, but 'twas some faery place)  
 Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails outspread,  
 Two lovely children run an endless race,

A sister and a brother !

This far outstript the other ;

Yet ever runs she with reverted face,  
 And looks and listens for the boy behind :

For he, alas ! is blind !

O'er rough and smooth with even step he passed,  
 And knows not whether he be first or last.

## CVII

*ON AN INFANT*  
*which died before Baptism*

' Be, rather than be call'd, a child of God,'  
 Death whisper'd !—with assenting nod,  
 Its head upon its mother's breast,

The Baby bow'd, without demur—  
 Of the kingdom of the Blest  
 Possessor, not inheritor.

## ROBERT SOUTHEY

CVIII

*THE BATTLE OF BLENHEIM*

It was a summer evening,  
 Old Kaspar's work was done ;  
 And he before his cottage door  
     Was sitting in the sun,  
 And by him sported on the green  
 His little grandchild Wilhelmine.

She saw her brother Peterkin  
     Roll something large and round,  
 That he, beside the rivulet,  
     In playing there, had found ;  
 He came to ask what he had found,  
 That was so large, and smooth, and round.

Old Kaspar took it from the boy,  
     Who stood expectant by ;  
 And then the old man shook his head,  
     And with a natural sigh,  
     'Tis some poor fellow's skull,' said he,  
     'Who fell in the great victory.'

'I find them in the garden, for  
     There's many here about,  
 And often when I go to plough,  
     The ploughshare turns them out ;  
 For many thousand men,' said he,  
     'Were slain in the great victory.'

'Now tell us what 'twas all about,'  
     Young Peterkin he cries,  
 And little Wilhelmine looks up  
     With wonder-waiting eyes ;  
     'Now tell us all about the war,  
     And what they kill'd each other for ?'

'It was the English,' Kaspar cried,

'That put the French to rout ;  
But what they kill'd each other for,

I could not well make out.

But everybody said,' quoth he,

'That 'twas a famous victory.

'My father lived at Blenheim then,

Yon little stream hard by ;

They burnt his dwelling to the ground,

And he was forced to fly :

So with his wife and child he fled,

Nor had he where to rest his head.

'With fire and sword the country round

Was wasted far and wide,

And many a childing mother then,

And new-born infant, died ;—

But things like that, you know, must be

At every famous victory.

'They say it was a shocking sight,

After the field was won,

For many thousand bodies here

Lay rotting in the sun ;—

But things like that, you know, must be,

After a famous victory.

'Great praise the Duke of Marlbro' won,

And our good Prince Eugene.'—

'Why, 'twas a very wicked thing ! '

Said little Wilhelmine.—

'Nay—nay—my little girl,' quoth he,

'It was a famous victory !

'And everybody praised the Duke

Who such a fight did win.'—

'But what good came of it at last ? '

Quoth little Peterkin.—

'Why that I cannot tell,' said he,

'But 'twas a famous victory.'

## CHARLES LAMB

CIX

*RECOLLECTION*

In my poor mind it is most sweet to muse  
 Upon the days gone by ; to act in thought  
 Past seasons o'er, and be again a child ;  
 To sit in fancy on the turf-clad slope  
 Down which the child would roll ; to pluck gay  
 flowers,  
 Make posies in the sun, which the child's hand  
 (Childhood offended soon, soon reconciled)  
 Would throw away, and straight take up again,  
 Then fling them to the winds, and o'er the  
 lawn  
 Bound with so playful and so light a foot,  
 That the pressed daisy scarce declined her head.

CX

*ON AN INFANT DYING AS SOON  
AS BORN*

I saw where in the shroud did lurk  
 A curious frame of Nature's work ;  
 A floweret crush'd in the bud,  
 A nameless piece of Babyhood,  
 Was in her cradle-coffin lying ;  
 Extinct, with scarce the sense of dying :  
 So soon to exchange the imprisoning womb  
 For darker closets of the tomb !  
 She did but ope an eye, and put  
 A clear beam forth, then straight up shut  
 For the long dark : ne'er more to see  
 Through glasses of mortality.  
 Riddle of destiny, who can show  
 What thy short visit meant, or know  
 What thy errand here below ?

Shall we say that Nature blind  
Check'd her hand, and changed her mind,  
Just when she had exactly wrought  
A finish'd pattern without fault ?  
Could she flag, or could she tire,  
Or lack'd she the Promethean fire  
(With her nine moons' long workings sicken'd)  
That should thy little limbs have quicken'd ?  
Limbs so firm, they seem'd to assure  
Life of health, and days mature :  
Woman's self in miniature !  
Limbs so fair, they might supply  
(Themselves now but cold imagery)  
The sculptor to make Beauty by.  
Or did the stern-eyed Fate descry  
That babe or mother, one must die ;  
So in mercy left the stock  
And cut the branch ; to save the shock  
Of young years widow'd, and the pain  
When single state comes back again  
To the lone man who, reft of wife,  
Thenceforward drags a maimèd life ?  
The economy of Heaven is dark,  
And wisest clerks have miss'd the mark,  
Why human buds, like this, should fall,  
More brief than fly ephemeral  
That has his day ; while shrivell'd crones  
Stiffen with age to stocks and stones ;  
And crabbed use the conscience sears  
In sinners of an hundred years.

Mother's prattle, mother's kiss,  
Baby fond, thou ne'er wilt miss :  
Rites, which custom does impose,  
Silver bells, and baby clothes ;  
Coral redder than those lips  
Which pale death did late eclipse ;  
Music framed for infants' glee,  
Whistle never tuned for thee ;  
Though thou want'st not, thou shalt have them,  
Loving hearts were they which gave them.  
Let not one be missing ; nurse,

See them laid upon the hearse  
 Of infant slain by doom perverse.  
 Why should kings and nobles have  
 Pictured trophies to their grave,  
 And we, churls, to thee deny  
 Thy pretty toys with thee to lie—  
 A more harmless vanity ?

## CXI

*THE CHANGE*

Louisa serious grown and mild,  
 I knew you once a romping child,  
 Obstreperous much, and very wild.

Then you would clamber up my knees,  
 And strive with every art to tease,  
 When every art of yours could please.

Those things would scarce be proper now,  
 But they are gone, I know not how ;  
 And woman's written on your brow.

Time draws his finger o'er the scene ;  
 But I cannot forget between  
 The thing to me you once have been.

## WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

## CXII

*IANTHE'S SHELL*

Darling shell, where hast thou been,  
 West or East ? or heard or seen ?  
 From what pastimes art thou come ?  
 Can we make amends at home ?

Whether thou hast tuned the dance  
 To the maids of ocean

Know I not ; but Ignorance  
Never hurts Devotion.

This I know, Ianthe's shell,  
I must ever love thee well,  
Though too little to resound  
While the Nereids dance around ;

For, of all the shells that are,  
Thou art sure the brightest ;  
Thou, Ianthe's infant care,  
Most these eyes delightest.

To thy early aid she owes  
Teeth like budding snowdrop rows :  
And what other shell can say  
On her bosom once it lay ?

That which into Cyprus bore  
Venus from her native sea,  
(Pride of shells !) was never more  
Dear to her than thou to me.

## CXIII

*IANTHE*

From you, Ianthe, little troubles pass  
Like little ripples down a sunny river ;  
Your pleasures spring like daisies in the grass,  
Cut down, and up again as blithe as ever.

## CXIV

*THE SMILE*

There are some wishes that may start  
Nor cloud the brow nor sting the heart.  
Gladly then would I see how smiled  
One who now fondles with her child ;  
How smiled she but six years ago,  
Herself a child, or nearly so.

Yes, let me bring before my sight  
 The silken tresses chain'd up tight,  
 The tiny fingers tipt with red  
 By tossing up the strawberry-bed ;  
 Half-open lips, long violet eyes,  
 A little rounder with surprise,  
 And then (her chin against the knee)  
 ' Mamma, who can that stranger be ?  
 How grave the smile he smiles on me ! '

## cxv

*MY SERIOUS SON*

My serious son ! I see thee look  
 First on the picture, then the book.  
 I catch the wish that thou couldst paint  
 The yearnings of the ecstatic saint.  
 Give it not up, my serious son !  
 Wish it again, and it is done.  
 Seldom will any fail who tries  
 With patient hand and steadfast eyes,  
 And wooes the true with such pure sighs.

## cxvi

*HOUSEHOLD GODS*

Ye little household gods, that make  
 My heart leap lighter with your play,  
 And never let it sink or ache,  
 Unless you are too far away ;  
  
 Eight years have flown, and never yet  
 One day has risen up between  
 The kisses of my earlier pet,  
 And few the hours he was not seen.  
  
 How can I call to you from Rome ?  
 Will *mamma* teach what *babbo* said ?

Have ye not heard him talk at home  
About the city of the dead ?

Marvellous tales will *babbo* tell,  
If you don't clasp his throat too tight,  
Tales which you, Arnold, will love well,  
Though Julia's cheek turns pale with fright.

How, swimming o'er the Tiber, Clelia  
Headed the rescued virgin train ;  
And, loftier virtue ! how Cornelia  
Lived when her two brave sons were slain.

This is my birthday : may ye waltz  
Till mamma cracks her best guitar !  
Yours are true pleasures ; those are false  
We wise ones follow from afar.

What shall I bring you ? would you like  
Urn, image, glass, red, yellow, blue,  
Stricken by Time, who soon must strike  
As deep the heart that beats for you ?

## CXVII

## CHILD OF A DAY

Child of a day, thou knowest not  
The tears that overflow thine urn,  
The gushing eyes that read thy lot,  
Nor, if thou knewst, couldst return !  
And why the wish ! The pure and blest  
Watch like thy mother o'er thy sleep.  
O peaceful night ! O envied rest !  
Thou wilt not ever see her weep.

## THOMAS CAMPBELL

CXVIII

*GERTRUDE OF WYOMING'S CHILDHOOD*

The rose of England bloomed on Gertrude's cheek—

What though these shades had seen her birth,  
her sire

A Briton's independence taught to seek

Far western worlds; and there his household fire

The light of social love did long inspire,  
And many a halcyon day he lived to see  
Unbroken but by one misfortune dire,  
When fate had reft his mutual heart: but she  
Was gone; and Gertrude climbed a widowed  
father's knee—

A loved bequest! and I may half impart  
To them that feel the strong paternal tie,  
How like a new existence to his heart  
That living flower uprose beneath his eye,  
Dear as she was, from cherub infancy,  
From hours when she would round his garden  
play,

To time when, as the ripening years went by,  
Her lovely mind could culture well repay,  
And more engaging grew from pleasing day to  
day.

I may not print those thousand infant charms  
(Unconscious fascination, undesigned!) ;  
The orison repeated in his arms,  
For God to bless her sire, and all mankind;  
The book, the bosom on his knee reclined,  
Or how sweet fairy-lore he heard her con  
(The playmate ere the teacher of her mind)  
All uncompanioned else her heart had gone  
Till now, in Gertrude's eyes, their ninth blue  
summer shone.

## CXIX

*INSPIRATION*

Inspire me, child, with visions fair !  
 For children, in Creation, are  
 The only things that could be given  
 Back, and alive—unchanged—to Heaven.

## CXX

*THE FLIGHT OF TIME*

The more we live, more brief appear  
 Our life's succeeding stages :  
 A day to childhood seems a year,  
 And years like passing ages. . . .

Heaven gives our years of fading strength  
 Indemnifying fleetness ;  
 And those of youth, a seeming length  
 Proportion'd to their sweetness.

## LEIGH HUNT

## CXXI

*TO T. L. H.*

(*Six Years Old, During a Sickness*)

Sleep breathes at last from out thee,  
 My little patient boy ;  
 And balmy rest about thee  
 Smooths off the day's annoy.  
 I sit me down, and think  
 Of all thy winning ways :  
 Yet almost wish, with sudden shrink,  
 That I had less to praise.

Thy sidelong pillowed meekness,  
 Thy thanks to all that aid,

Thy heart, in pain and weakness,  
 Of fancied faults afraid ;  
     The little trembling hand  
 That wipes thy quiet tears,—  
 These, these are things that may demand  
     Dread memories for years. . . .

Ah, first-born of thy mother,  
     When life and hope were new,  
 Kind playmate of thy brother,  
     Thy sister, father too ;  
         My light, where'er I go,  
         My bird, when prison-bound,  
 My hand-in-hand companion,—no,  
         My prayers shall hold thee round.

To say ' He has departed,'—  
     ' His voice '—' his face '—is gone ;  
 To feel impatient-hearted,  
     Yet feel we must bear on ;  
         Ah, I could not endure  
         To whisper of such woe,  
 Unless I felt this sleep ensure  
     That it will not be so.

## THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK

CXXII

## MARGARET LOVE PEACOCK

(Three Years Old)

Long night succeeds thy little day ;  
 O blighted blossom ! can it be,  
 That this grey stone and grassy clay  
     Have closed our anxious care of thee ?  
 The half-formed speech of artless thought,  
     That spoke a mind beyond thy years,  
 The song, the dance by nature taught,  
     The sunny smiles, the transient tears,  
 The symmetry of face and form,  
     The eye with light and life replete,

The little heart so fondly warm,  
The voice so musically sweet,—

These, lost to hope, in memory yet  
Around the hearts that loved thee cling,  
Shadowing, with long and vain regret,  
The too fair promise of thy spring.

JOHN WILSON

CXXIII

*TO A SLEEPING CHILD*

. . . Who can tell what visions high  
May bless an infant's sleeping eye !  
What brighter throne can brightness find  
To reign on than an infant's mind,  
Ere sin destroy or error dim  
The glory of the seraphim ?

Oh, vision fair, that I could be  
Again as young, as pure as thee ! . . .

Fair was that face as break of dawn,  
When o'er its beauty sleep was drawn  
Like a thin veil that half-concealed  
The light of soul, and half-revealed.  
While thy hushed heart with visions wrought,  
Each trembling eyelash moved with thought,  
And things we dream, but ne'er can speak,  
Like clouds came floating o'er thy cheek,  
Such summer-clouds as travel light,  
When the soul's heaven lies calm and bright ;  
Till thou awok'st—then to thine eye  
Thy whole heart leapt in ecstasy !  
And lovely is that heart of thine,  
Or sure these eyes could never shine  
With such a wild, yet bashful glee,  
Gay, half-o'ercome timidity !

## SIR AUBREY DE VERE

CXXIV

*THE CHILDREN BAND**(The Children's Crusade)*

All holy influences dwell within  
 The breast of Childhood : instincts fresh from  
 God  
 Inspire it, ere the heart beneath the rod  
 Of grief hath bled, or caught the plague of sin.  
 How mighty was that fervour which could win  
 Its way to infant souls !—and was the sod  
 Of Palestine by infant Croisés trod ?  
 Like Joseph went they forth, or Benjamin,  
 In all their touching beauty, to redeem ?  
 And did their soft lips kiss the sepulchre ?  
 Alas ! the lovely pageant, as a dream,  
 Faded ! they sank not through ignoble fear ;  
 They felt no Moslem steel. By mountain, stream,  
 In sands, in fens, they died—no mother near !

## BRYAN WALLER PROCTER

CXXV

*TO ADELAIDE*

Child of my heart ! my sweet beloved First-born !  
 Thou dove, that tidings bring'st of calmer hours !  
 Thou rainbow, who dost shine when all the  
 showers  
 Are past—or passing ! Rose which hath no  
 thorn,  
 No spot, no blemish, pure and unforlorn !  
 Untouched, untainted ! Oh, my flower of  
 flowers !  
 More welcome than to bees are summer bowers ;  
 To stranded seamen, life-assuring morn.

Welcome—a thousand welcomes. Care, who  
    clings  
Round all, seems loosening now its serpent fold ;  
New hope springs upward ; and the bright world  
    seems  
Cast back into a youth of endless springs !  
Sweet mother, is it so ?—or grow I old,  
Bewildered in divine Elysian dreams ?

## CXXVI

*WISHES*

Sweet be her dreams, the fair, the young !  
    Grace, Beauty, breathe upon her !  
Music, haunt thou about her tongue !  
    Life, fill her path with honour !

All golden thoughts, all wealth of days,  
    Truth, Friendship, Love, surround her !  
So may she smile, till life be closed,  
    And Angel hands have crowned her !

## JOHN KEBLE

## CXXVII

*CHILDREN WITH DUMB CREATURES*

Thou mak'st me jealous, Infant dear ;  
    Why wilt thou waste thy precious smiles,  
    Thy beckonings blithe, and joyous wiles,  
On bird or insect gliding near ?  
    Why court the deaf and blind ?  
What is this wondrous sympathy,  
    That draws thee so, heart, ear and eye,  
    Towards the inferior kind ?

We tempt thee much to look and sing,—  
    Thy mimic notes are rather drawn  
    From feathered playmates on the lawn.  
The quivering moth or bee's soft wing,

Brushing the window pane,  
 Will reach thee in thy dreamy trance,  
 When nurses' skill for one bright glance  
 Hath toil'd an hour in vain.

And as thou hold'st the creatures dear,  
 So are they fain on thee to wait.  
 Blood-hounds at thy caress abate  
 Their bayings wild ; yea, without fear  
 Thou dalliest in the lair  
 Of watch-dog stern ; thy mother's eye  
 Shrinks not to see thee slumbering lie  
 Beneath his duteous care. . . .

Ah, you have been in Jesus' arms,  
 The holy Fount hath you imbued  
 With His all-healing kindly Blood,  
 And somewhat of His pastoral charms,  
 And care for His lost sheep,  
 Ye there have learn'd : in order'd tones  
 Gently to soothe the lesser ones,  
 And watch their noon-day sleep. . . .

## CXXVIII

*GARDENING*

Seest thou yon woodland child,  
 How amid flowerets wild,  
 Wilder himself, he plies his pleasure-task ?  
 That ring of fragrant ground,  
 With its low woodbine bound,  
 He claims : no more, as yet, his little heart need  
 ask.

There learns he flower and weed  
 To sort with careful heed :  
 He waits not for the weary noontide hour.  
 There with the soft night air  
 Comes his refreshing care :  
 Each tiny leaf looks up, and thanks him for the  
 shower.

Thus faithful found awhile,  
 He wins the joyous smile  
 Of friend or parent; glad and bright is he,  
 When for his garland gay.  
 He hears the kind voice say,  
 ' Well hast thou wrought, dear boy : the garden  
 thine shall be.'

And when long years are flown,  
 And the proud word, Mine Own,  
 Familiar sounds, what joy in field or bower  
 To view by Memory's aid  
 Again that garden glade,  
 And muse on all the lore there learned in each  
 bright hour !

Is not a life well spent  
 A child's play-garden, lent  
 For Heaven's high trust to train young heart  
 and limb ?  
 When in yon field on high  
 Our hard-won powers we try,  
 Will no mild tones of earth blend with the  
 adoring hymn ?  
 O fragrant, sure, will prove  
 The breath of patient Love,  
 Even from these fading sweets by Memory cast,  
 As deepening evermore  
 To Him our song we pour,  
 Who lent us Earth, that He might give us Heaven  
 at last.

## CXXIX

*'NURSE, LET ME DRAW'*

' Nurse, let me draw the baby's veil aside,  
 I want to see the Cross upon her brow.'  
 Nay, maiden dear, that seal may not abide  
 In sight of mortals' ken ; 'tis vanish'd now.  
 ' Alas, for pity ! when the holy man  
 Said even now, ' I sign thee with the cross,'

What joy to think that I at home should scan  
 The bright, clear lines ! O, sad and sudden  
 loss ! '

—Complain not so, my child : no loss is here,  
 But endless gain. If thou wilt open wide  
 Faith's inward eye, soon shall to thee appear  
 What now by wondering angels is descried,

Thy Lord's true token, seen but not believ'd,  
 And therefore doubly blest. O, mark it well,  
 And be this rule in thy young heart receiv'd,  
 Blest, who content with Him in twilight  
 dwell. . . .

## PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

cxxx

## TO WILLIAM SHELLEY

My lost William, thou in whom  
 Some bright spirit lived, and did  
 That decaying robe consume  
 Which its lustre faintly hid,  
 Here its ashes find a tomb,  
 But beneath this pyramid  
 Thou art not—if a thing divine  
 Like thee can die, thy funeral shrine  
 Is thy mother's grief and mine.

Where art thou, my gentle child ?  
 Let me think thy spirit feeds,  
 With its life intense and mild,  
 The love of living leaves and weeds,  
 Among these tombs and ruins wild ;—  
 Let me think that through low seeds  
 Of sweet flowers and sunny grass,  
 Into their hues and scents may pass  
 A portion . . .

## CXXXI

## TO WILLIAM SHELLEY

(A Fragment)

Thy little footsteps on the sands  
     Of a remote and lonely shore ;  
 The twinkling of thine infant hands,  
     Where now the worm will feed no more :  
 Thy mingled look of love and glee  
     When we returned to gaze on thee !

## FELICIA DOROTHEA HEMANS

## CXXXII

## THE CHILD'S SLEEP

Thou sleepest—but when wilt thou wake, fair child ?  
 When the fawn awakes in the forest wild ?  
 When the lark's wing mounts with the breeze of morn ?  
 When the first rich breath of the rose is born ?  
 Lonely thou sleepest, yet something lies  
 Too deep and still on thy soft-sealed eyes ;  
 Mournful, though sweet, is thy rest to see—  
 When will the hour of thy rising be ?

Not when the fawn wakes—not when the lark  
 On the crimson cloud of the morn floats dark.  
 Grief with vain passionate tears hath wet  
 The hair, shedding gleams from thy pale brow yet ;  
 Love, with sad kisses unfelt, hath pressed  
 Thy meek-dropt eyelids and quiet breast ;  
 And the glad spring, calling out bird and bee,  
 Shall colour all blossoms, fair child ! but thee.

Thou'rt gone from us, bright one ! —that thou  
     shouldst die,  
 And life be left to the butterfly !

Thou'rt gone as a dewdrop is swept from the bough ;  
 Oh ! for the world where thy home is now !  
 How may we love but in doubt and fear,  
 How may we anchor our fond hearts here ;  
 How should e'en joy but a trembler be,  
 Beautiful dust ! when we look on thee ?

## JOHN CLARE

CXXXIII

## 'SEASONS RETURN'

Spring comes anew, and brings each little pledge  
 That still, as wont, my childish heart deceives :  
 I stoop again for violets in the hedge,  
 Among the ivy and old withered leaves ;  
 And often mark, amid the clumps of sedge,  
 The pooty-shells I gathered when a boy :  
 But cares have claimed me many an evil day,  
 And chilled the relish which I had for joy.  
 Yet when crab-blossoms blush among the May,  
 As erst in years gone by, I scramble now  
 Up 'mid the bramble for my old esteem'd,  
 Filling my hands with many a blooming bough ;  
 Till the heart-stirring past as present seems,  
 Save the bright sunshine of those fairy dreams.

CXXXIV

## MY EARLY HOME

Here sparrows build upon the trees,  
 And stockdove hides her nest ;  
 The leaves are winnow'd by the breeze  
 Into a calmer rest ;  
 The black-cap's song was very sweet,  
 That used the rose to kiss ;  
 It made the Paradise complete :  
 My early home was this.

The redbreast from the sweet-briar bush  
     Drop't down to pick the worm ;  
 On the horse-chestnut sang the thrush,  
     O'er the house where I was born ;  
 The moonlight, like a shower of pearls,  
     Fell o'er this ' bower of bliss,'  
 And on the bench sat boys and girls :  
     My early home was this.

The old house stoop'd just like a cave,  
     Thatch'd o'er with mosses green ;  
 Winter around the walls would rave,  
     But all was calm within ;  
 The trees are here all green again,  
     Here bees the flowers still kiss,  
 But flowers and trees seem'd sweeter then :  
     My early home was this.

## HARTLEY COLERIDGE

cxxxv

*CHILDHOOD*

Oh, what a wilderness were this sad world  
 If man were always man, and never child ;  
 If Nature gave no time, so sweetly wild,  
 When every thought is deftly crisped and curled,  
 Like fragrant hyacinth with dew impearled,  
 And every feeling in itself confiding,  
 Yet never single, but continuous, gliding  
 With wavy motion as, on wings unfurled,  
 A seraph clips Empyreal ! Such man was  
 Ere sin had made him know himself too well.  
 No child was born ere that primaeval loss.  
 What might have been no living soul can tell,  
 But Heaven is kind, and therefore all possess  
 Once in their life fair Eden's simpleness.

## CXXXVI

*TO AN INFANT*

Wise is the way of Nature, first to make  
 This tiny model of what is to be,  
 A thing that we may love as soon as see,  
 That seems as passive as a summer lake  
 When there is not a sigh of wind to shake  
 The aspen leaf upon the tall, slim tree.  
 Yet who can tell, sweet infant mystery,  
 What thoughts in thee may now begin to wake ?  
 Something already dost thou know of pain,  
 And, sinless, bear'st the penalty of sin ;  
 And yet as quickly wilt thou smile again  
 After thy cries, as vanishes the stain  
 Of breath from steel. So may the peace within  
 In thy ripe season re-assert its reign.

## CXXXVII

*TO MARGARET, ON HER FIRST  
BIRTHDAY*

One year is past, with change and sorrow fraught,  
 Since first the little Margaret drew her breath,  
 And yet the fatal names of Sin and Death,  
 Her sad inheritance, she knoweth not.  
 That lore, by earth inevitably taught,  
 In the still world of spirits is untold ;  
 'Tis not of Death or Sin that angels hold  
 Sweet converse with the slumb'ring infant's  
 thought.  
 Merely she is with God, and God with her  
 And her meek ignorance. Guiltless of demur,  
 For her is faith a hope ; her innocence  
 Is holiness ; the bright-eyed crowing glee,  
 That makes her leap her grandsire's face to  
 see,  
 Is love unfeign'd and willing reverence.

## CXXXVIII

*ON PARTING WITH A VERY PRETTY,  
BUT VERY LITTLE LADY*

'Tis ever thus. We only meet on earth  
 That we may know how sad it is to part :  
 And sad indeed it were, if, in the heart,  
 There were no store reserved against a dearth,  
 No calm Elysium for departed Mirth,  
 Haunted by gentle shadows of past Pleasure :  
 Where the sweet folly, the light-footed measure,  
 And graver trifles of the shining hearth  
 Live in their own dear image. Lady fair,  
 Thy presence in our little vale has been  
 A visitation of the Fairy Queen,  
 Who for brief space reveals her beauty rare,  
 And shows her tricksy feats to mortal eyes,  
 Then fades into her viewless Paradise.

## CXXXIX

*TO A PROUD KINSWOMAN*

Fair maid, had I not heard thy baby cries,  
 Nor seen thy girlish, sweet vicissitude,  
 Thy mazy motions, striving to elude,  
 Yet wooing still a parent's watchful eyes,  
 Thy humours, many as the opal's dyes,  
 And lovely all ;—methinks thy scornful mood,  
 And bearing high of stately womanhood,—  
 Thy brow, where Beauty sits to tyrannise  
 O'er humble love, had made me sadly fear thee,  
 For never sure was seen a royal bride,  
 Whose gentleness gave grace to so much pride—  
 My very thoughts would tremble to be near  
 thee ;  
 But when I see thee at thy father's side,  
 Old times unqueen thee, and old loves endear  
 thee.

## CXL

*SHE PASS'D AWAY LIKE MORNING  
DEW*

Ah ! well it is, since she is gone,  
She can return no more,  
To see the face so dim and wan,  
That was so warm before.

Familiar things would all look strange,  
And pleasure past be woe ;  
A record sad of ceaseless change,  
Is all the world below.

The very hills, they are not now  
The hills which once they were ;  
They change as we are changed, or how  
Could we the burden bear ? . . .

She pass'd away, like morning dew,  
Before the sun was high :  
So brief her time, she scarcely knew  
The meaning of a sigh.

As round the rose its soft perfume,  
Sweet love around her floated ;  
Admired she grew—while mortal doom  
Crept on, unfear'd, unnoted.

Love was her guardian Angel here,  
But love to death resign'd her ;  
Tho' Love was kind, why should we fear,  
But holy death is kinder ?

## THOMAS HOOD

CXLI

*I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER*

I remember, I remember  
The house where I was born,  
The little window where the sun  
Came peeping in at morn ;  
He never came a wink too soon,  
Nor brought too long a day,  
But now, I often wish the night  
Had borne my breath away.

I remember, I remember  
The roses, red and white,  
The violets, and the lily-cups,  
Those flowers made of light !  
The lilac where the robin built,  
And where my brother set  
The laburnum on his birthday—  
The tree is living yet !

I remember, I remember  
Where I was used to swing,  
And thought the air must rush as fresh  
To swallows on the wing ;  
My spirit flew in feathers then,  
That is so heavy now,  
And summer pools could hardly cool  
The fever on my brow.

I remember, I remember  
The fir trees dark and high ;  
I used to think their slender tops  
Were close against the sky :  
It was a childish ignorance,  
But now 'tis little joy  
To know I'm farther off from Heav'n  
Than when I was a boy.

MARY HOWITT

CXLII

*LITTLE CHILDREN*

Sporting through the forest wide ;  
Playing by the waterside ;  
Wandering o'er the heathy fells,  
Down within the woodland dells ;  
All among the mountains wild  
Dwelleth many a little child !  
In the baron's hall of pride,  
By the poor man's dull fireside ;  
'Mid the mighty, 'mid the mean,  
Little children may be seen,  
Like the flowers that spring up fair,  
Bright and countless, everywhere.

Wheresoe'er a foot hath gone,  
Wheresoe'er the sun hath shone  
On a league of peopled ground,  
Little children may be found !  
Blessings on them ! they in me  
Move a kindly sympathy  
With their wishes, hopes and fears ;  
With their laughter and their tears ;  
With their wonder so intense,  
And their small experience !

Little children, not alone  
On the wide earth are ye known.  
'Mid its labours and its cares,  
'Mid its sufferings and its snares ;  
Free from sorrow, free from strife,  
In the world of love and life,  
Where no sinful thing hath trod,  
In the presence of your God,  
Spotless, blameless, glorified,  
Little children, ye abide !

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY,  
LORD MACAULAY

CXLIII

*THE REMORSE OF CAIN*

All hearts are light around the hall  
 Save his who is the lord of all.  
 The painted roofs, the attendant train,  
 The lights, the banquet, all are vain.  
 He sees them not. His fancy strays  
 To other scenes and other days.  
 A cot by a lone forest's edge,  
     A fountain murmuring through the trees,  
 A garden with a wildflower hedge,  
     Whence sounds the music of the bees,  
 A little flock of sheep at rest  
 Upon a mountain's swarthy breast.  
 On his rude spade he seems to lean.  
     Beside the well remembered stone,  
 Rejoicing o'er the promised green  
     Of the first harvest man hath sown.  
 He sees his mother's tears ;  
 His father's voice he hears,  
 Kind as when first it praised his youthful skill.  
     And soon a seraph-child,  
 In boyish rapture wild,  
 With a light crook comes bounding from the hill,  
     Kisses his hands and strokes his face,  
 And nestles close in his embrace. . . .

## WILLIAM BARNES

CXLIV

*CHILDHOOD*

Aye at that time our days were but vew,  
 An' our lim's were but small, an' a-growèn ;

An' then the feäir worold wer new,  
 An' life were all hopevul an' gaÿ ;  
 An' the times o' the sproutèn o' leaves,  
 An' the cheäk-burnèn seasons o' mowèn,  
 An' bindèn o' red-headed sheaves,  
 Wer all welcome seasons o' jaÿ.

Then the housen seem'd high, that be low,  
 An' the brook did seem wide that is narrow,  
 An' time, that do vlee, did goo slow,  
 An' veelèns now feeble wer strong,  
 An' our worold did end wi' the neämes  
 Ov the Sha'sbury Hill or Bulbarrow ;  
 An' life did seem only the geämes  
 That we play'd as the days rolled along.

Then the rivers, an' high-timber'd lands,  
 An' the zilvery hills, 'ithout buyèn,  
 Did seem to come into our hands  
 Vrom others that own'd 'em avore ;  
 An' all zickness, an' sorrow, an' need,  
 Seem'd to die wi' the wold vo'k a-dyèn,  
 An' leäve us vor ever a-freed  
 From evils our vorefathers bore.

But happy be childern the while  
 They have elders a-livèn to love 'em,  
 An' teäke all the wearisome tweil  
 That zome hands or others mus' do ;  
 Like the low-headed shrubs that be warm,  
 In the lewth o' the trees up above 'em,  
 A-screen'd vrom the cwold blowèn storm  
 That the timber avore 'em must rue.

## CXLV

## THE WELSHNUT TREE

When in the evenèn the zun's a zinkèn,  
 A-drowèn sheädes vrom the yellow west,  
 An' mother, weary, 's a-zot a thinkèn,  
 Wi' vwolded eärms by the virc at rest,

Then we do zwarm, O,  
 Wi' such a charm, O,  
 So vull o' glee by the welshnut tree.

A-leävèn father in-doors, a leinèn  
 In his girt chair in his easy shoes,  
 Or in the settle so high behine en,  
 While down bezide en the dog do snooze,  
 Our tongues do run, O,  
 Enough to stun, O,  
 Your head wi' glee by the welshnut tree.

There we do play ' thread the woman's needle,'  
 An' slap the maidens a dartèn drough :  
 Or try who'll ax 'em the hardest riddle,  
 Or soonest tell woone a-put us, true ;  
 Or zit an' ring, O,  
 The bells, ding, ding, O,  
 Upon our knee by the welshnut tree.

An' zome do goo out, an' hide in orcha't  
 An' tothers, slyly a-stealèn by,  
 Where there's a dark cunnèn pleâce, do sarch it,  
 Till they do zee em an' cry, ' I spy,'  
 An' thik a-vound, O,  
 Do gié a bound, O,  
 To get off free to the welshnut tree.

Poll went woone night, that we midden vind her,  
 Inzide a woak wi' a hollow moot,  
 An' drough a hole near the groun' behind her,  
 I pok'd a stick in, an' catch'd her voot ;  
 An' out she scream'd, O,  
 An' jump'd, an' seem'd, O,  
 A'móst to vlee to the welshnut tree.

An' when, at last, at the drashel, mother  
 Do call us, smilèn, in-door to rest,  
 Then we do cluster by woone another,  
 To zee hwome them we do love the best :  
 An' then do sound, O,  
 ' Good night,' all round, O,  
 To end our glee by the welshnut tree.

## CXLVI

*THE TURNSTILE*

Ah ! sad wer we as we did peäce  
The wold church road, wi' downcast feäce,  
The while the bells, that mwoan'd so deep  
Above our child a-left asleep,  
Wer now a-zingèn all alive  
Wi' tother bells to meäke the vive.  
But up at woone pleäce we come by,  
'Twer hard to keep woone's two eyes dry :  
On Steän-cliff road, 'ithin the drong,  
Up where, as vo'k do pass along,  
The turnèn stile, a-painted white,  
Do sheen by day an' show by night.  
Vor always there, as we did goo  
To church, thik stile did let us drough,  
Wi' spreädèn eärms that wheel'd to guide  
Us each in turn to tother zide.  
An' vu'st ov all the traïn he took  
My wife, wi' winsome gaït an' look ;  
An' then zent on my little maid,  
A-skippèn onward, overjaÿ'd  
To reach ageän the pleäce o' pride,  
Her comely mother's left han' zide.  
An' then a-wheelèn roun', he took  
On me, 'ithin his third white nook.  
An' in the fourth, a-sheäkèn wild,  
He zent us on our giddy child.  
But eesterday he guided slow  
My downcast Jenny, vull o' woe,  
An' then my little maid in black,  
A-walkèn softly on her track ;  
An' after he'd a-turn'd ageän,  
To let me goo along the leäne,  
He had noo little bwoy to vill  
His last white eärms, an' they stood still.

## CXLVII

*THE LITTLE SISTER*

O' zummer night, as day did gleam,  
 Wi' weänèn light, vrom red to wan,  
 An' we did play above the stream  
     Avore our house a-windèn on,  
 Our little sister, light o' tooe,  
     Did skip about in all her pride  
 O' snow-white frock an' sash o' blue,  
     A sheape that night wer slow to hide,  
 Bezide the brook a-tricklèn thin  
     Among the poppies, out an' in.

If periwinkles' buds o' blue  
     By lilies' hollow cups do wind,  
 What then can their two colours do  
     But call our sister back to mind ?  
 She wore noo black—she wore her white ;  
     She wore noo black—she wore her blue ;  
 She never murn'd another's flight,  
     Vor she's avore us all to goo  
 Vrom where our litté veet did tread  
     Vrom stwone to stwone the water's bed.

## CXLVIII

*THE MOTHERLESS CHILD*

The zun'd a-zet back t'other night,  
     But in the zettèn pleâce  
 The clouds, a-redden'd by his light,  
     Still glow'd avore my feäce.  
 An' I've a-lost my Meäry's smile,  
 I thought ; but still I have her chile,  
 Zoo like her, that my eyes can treäce  
 The mother's in her daughter's feäce.  
     O little feäce so near to me,  
 An' like thy mother's gone ; why need I zay

Sweet night cloud, wi' the glow o' my lost day,  
Thy looks be always dear to me ?

The zun'd a-zet another night ;  
But, by the moon on high,  
He still did zend us back his light  
Below a cwolder sky.

My Meäry's in a better land  
I thought, but still her chile's at hand,  
An' in her chile she'll zend me on  
Her love, though she herself's a-gone.

O little chile so near to me,  
An' like thy mother gone ; why need I zay,  
Sweet moon, the messenger vrom my lost day,  
Thy looks be always dear to me ?

## CXLIX

*THE MOTHER'S DREAM*

I'd a dream to-night  
As I fell asleep,  
Oh ! the touching sight  
Makes me still to weep :  
Of my little lad,  
Gone to leave me sad,  
Aye, the child I had,  
But was not to keep.

As in heaven high,  
I my child did seek,  
There, in train, came by  
Children fair and meek,  
Each in lily-white,  
With a lamp alight ;  
Each was clear to sight,  
But they did not speak.

Then, a little sad,  
Came my child in turn,

But the lamp he had,  
 Oh ! it did not burn ;  
 He, to clear my doubt,  
 Said, half turn'd about,  
 ' Your tears put it out ;  
 Mother, never mourn.'

## CL

*THE SLANTEN LIGHT O' FALL*

Ah ! Jeäne, my maïd, I stood to you,  
 When you wer christen'd, small an' light,  
 Wi' tiny eärms o' red an' blue,  
 A-hangèn in your robe o' white.  
 We brought ye to the hallow'd stwone,  
 Vor Christ to teäke ye vor His own,  
 When harvest work wer all a-done,  
 An' time brought round October zun—  
 The slantèn light o' Fall.

An' I can mind the wind wer rough,  
 An' gather'd clouds, but brought noo storms,  
 An' you did nessle warm enough,  
 'Ithin your smilèn mother's eärms.  
 The whindlèn grass did quiver light,  
 Among the stubble, feäded white,  
 An' if at times the zunlight broke  
 Upon the ground, or on the vo'k,  
 'Twer slantèn light o' Fall.

An' when we brought ye drough the door  
 O' Knapton Church, a child o' greâce,  
 There cluster'd round a'most a score  
 O' vo'k to zee your tiny feäce.  
 An' there we all did veel so proud,  
 To zee an' op'nèn in the cloud,  
 An' then a stream o' light break drough,  
 A-sheenèn brightly down on you—  
 The slantèn light o' Fall.

But now your time's a-come to stand  
 In church, a blushèn at my zide,  
 The while a bridegroom vrom my hand  
 Ha' took ye vor his faithvul bride.  
 Your christèn neäme we gi'd ye here,  
 When Fall did cool the weästèn year ;  
 An' now, ageän, we brought ye drough  
 The doorway, wi' your surneäme new,  
 In slantèn light o' Fall.

An' zoo vur, Jeäne, your life is feäir,  
 An' God ha' been your steadvast friend,  
 An' mid ye have mwore jay than ceäre,  
 Vor ever, till your journey's end..  
 An' I've a watch'd ye on wi' pride,  
 But now I soon mus' leäve your zide,  
 Vor you ha' still life's spring-tide zun,  
 But my life, Jeäne, is now a-run  
 To slantèn light o' Fall.

## SARA COLERIDGE

CLI

*O SLEEP, MY BABE*

O sleep, my babe, hear not the rippling wave,  
 Nor feel the breeze that round thee ling'ring  
 strays  
 To drink thy balmy breath,  
 And sigh one long farewell.

Soon shall it mourn above thy wat'ry bed,  
 And whisper to me, on the wave-beat shore,  
 Deep murm'ring in reproach,  
 Thy sad untimely fate. ~

Ere those dear eyes had open'd on the light,  
 In vain to plead, thy coming life was sold.  
 O waken'd but to sleep,  
 Whence it can wake no more !

A thousand and a thousand silken leaves  
 The tufted beech unfolds in early spring,  
     All clad in tenderest green,  
     All of the self-same shape :

A thousand infant faces, soft and sweet,  
 Each year sends forth, yet every mother views  
     Her last not least beloved  
     Like its dear self alone.

No musing mind hath ever yet foreshaped  
 The face to-morrow's sun shall first reveal,  
     No heart hath e'er conceived  
     What love that face will bring.

O sleep, my babe, nor heed how mourns the gale  
 To part with thy soft locks and fragrant breath,  
     As when it deeply sighs  
     O'er autumn's latest bloom.

## WINTHROP MACKWORTH PRAED

CLII

*SKETCH OF A YOUNG LADY FIVE MONTHS OLD*

My pretty, budding, breathing flower,  
     Methinks, if I to-morrow  
 Could manage, just for half-an-hour,  
     Sir Joshua's brush to borrow,  
 I might immortalise a few  
     Of all the myriad graces  
 Which Time, while yet they all are new,  
     With newer still replaces.

I'd paint, my child, your deep blue eyes,  
     Their quick and earnest flashes ;  
 I'd paint the fringe that round them lies,  
     The fringe of long dark lashes ;  
 I'd draw with most fastidious care  
     One eyebrow, then the other,

And that fair forehead, broad and fair,  
The forehead of your mother. . . .

Nor less on those twin rounded arms  
My new-found skill would linger,  
Nor less upon the rosy charms  
Of every tiny finger,  
Nor slight the small feet, little one,  
So prematurely clever  
That, though they neither walk nor run,  
I think they'd jump for ever.

But then your odd endearing ways—  
What study e'er could catch them ?  
Your aimless gestures, endless plays—  
What canvas e'er could match them ?  
Your lively leap of merriment,  
Your murmur of petition,  
Your serious silence of content,  
Your laugh of recognition.

Here were a puzzling toil, indeed,  
For Art's most fine creations !—  
Grow on, sweet baby : we will need,  
To note your transformations,  
No picture of your form or face,  
Your waking or your sleeping,  
But that which Love shall daily trace,  
And trust to Memory's keeping.

Hereafter, when revolving years  
Have made you tall and twenty,  
And brought you blended hopes and fears.  
And sighs and slaves in plenty,  
May those who watch our little saint  
Among her tasks and duties,  
Feel all her virtues hard to paint,  
As now we deem her beauties.

## RALPH WALDO EMERSON

CLIII

*From ' THRENODY '*

The south-wind brings  
Life, sunshine, and desire,  
And on every mount and meadow  
Breathes aromatic fire ;  
But over the dead he has no power,  
The lost, the lost, he cannot restore ;  
And, looking over the hills, I mourn  
The darling who shall not return

I see my empty house,  
I see my trees repair their boughs ;  
And he, the wondrous child,  
Whose silver warble wild  
Outvalued every pulsing sound  
Within the air's cerulean round—  
The hyacinthine boy, for whom  
Morn well might break and April bloom—  
The gracious boy, who did adorn  
The world whereinto he was born,  
And by his countenance repay  
The favour of the loving Day—  
Has disappeared from the Day's eye ;  
Far and wide she cannot find him ;  
My hopes pursue, they cannot bind him.

Returned this day, the south-wind searches,  
And finds young pines and budding birches ;  
But finds not the budding man ;  
Nature, who lost, cannot remake him ;  
Fate let him fall, Fate can't retake him ;  
Nature, Fate, men, him seek in vain.

And whither now, my truant wise and sweet,  
O, whither tend thy feet ?  
I had the right, few days ago,  
Thy steps to watch, thy place to know ;

How have I forfeited the right ?  
Hast thou forgot me in a new delight ?  
I hearken for thy household cheer,  
O eloquent child !  
Whose voice, an equal messenger,  
Conveyed thy meaning mild.  
What though the pains and joys  
Whereof it spoke were toys  
Fitting his age and ken,  
Yet fairest dames and bearded men,  
Who heard the sweet request,  
So gentle, wise, and grave,  
Bended with joy to his behest,  
And let the world's affairs go by,  
A while to share his cordial game,  
Or mend his wicker waggon-frame,  
Still plotting how their hungry ear  
That winsome voice again might hear ;  
For his lips could well pronounce  
Words that were persuasions.

Gentlest guardians marked serene  
His early hope, his liberal mien ;  
Took counsel from his guiding eyes  
To make this wisdom earthly wise.  
Ah, vainly do these eyes recall  
The school-march, each day's festival,  
When every morn my bosom glowed  
To watch the convoy on the road ;  
The babe in willow waggon closed,  
With rolling eyes and face composed ;  
With children forward and behind,  
Like Cupids studiously inclined ;  
And he the chieftain paced beside,  
The centre of the troop allied,  
With sunny face of sweet repose,  
To guard the babe from fancied foes.  
The little captain innocent  
Took the eye with him as he went ;  
Each village senior paused to scan  
And speak the lovely caravan.

From the window I look out  
 To mark thy beautiful parade,  
 Stately marching in cap and coat  
 To some tune by fairies play'd—  
 A music heard by thee alone  
 To works as noble led thee on.

Now Love and Pride, alas ! in vain,  
 Up and down their glances strain.  
 The painted sled stands where it stood ;  
 The kennel by the corded wood ;  
 His gathered sticks to staunch the wall  
 Of the snow-tower, when snow should fall :  
 The ominous hole he dug in the sand,  
 And childhood's castles built or planned ;  
 His daily haunts I well discern—  
 The poultry-yard, the shed, the barn—  
 And every inch of garden ground  
 Paced by the blessed feet around,  
 From the roadside to the brook  
 Whereinto he loved to look.  
 Step the meek birds where erst they ranged ;  
 The wintry garden lies unchanged :  
 The brook into the stream runs on ;  
 But the deep-eyed boy is gone. . . .

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER

CLIV

*THE SONG OF THE SCHOOL :*  
*St. Mark's, Morwenstow*

Sing to the Lord the children's hymn,  
 His gentle love declare,  
 Who bends amid the Seraphim  
 To hear the children's prayer.

He at a mother's breast was fed,  
 Though God's own Son was He ;  
 He learnt the first small words He said  
 At a meek mother's knee.

He held us to His mighty breast,  
 The children of the earth ;  
 He lifted up His hands and blessed  
 The babes of human birth.

So shall He be to us our God,  
 Our gracious Saviour too ;  
 The scenes we tread His footsteps trod,  
 The paths of youth He knew.

Lo ! from the stars His face will turn  
 On us with glances mild :  
 The angels of His presence yearn  
 To bless the little child.

Keep us, O Jesu Lord, for Thee,  
 That so, by Thy dear grace,  
 We, children of the font, may see  
 Our heavenly Father's face.

Sing to the Lord the children's hymn,  
 His tender love declare,  
 Who bends amid the Seraphim,  
 To hear the children's prayer.

### THOMAS WADE

CLV

#### *THE RETURN*

Smile, Baby ! for thy Mother home is coming,  
 Again to clasp thee to her yearning heart ;  
 Both memory and hope her way illumining  
 To the calm nook wherein thou nestled art.  
 Thou canst not run to meet her, Baby dear !  
 Nor hast sweet worded music on thy tongue,  
 But thou the music of her voice canst hear,  
 And o'er thee see her tender gazings hung :  
 And little recollections, fond tho' dim,  
 Enkindled in thy soul thro' ear and eye,

Shall lend thee graces of the cherubim  
Saluted by the breath of deity :  
Stir all thy tiny limbs, and softly trace  
Sweet love-assurance on thy pretty face !

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

CLVI

*THE CRY OF THE CHILDREN*

Do ye hear the children weeping, O my brothers,  
Ere the sorrow comes with years ?  
They are leaning their young heads against their  
mothers,—

And *that* cannot stop the tears.

The young lambs are bleating in the meadows,  
The young birds are chirping in the nest,  
The young fawns are playing with the shadows,  
The young flowers are blowing toward the  
west—

But the young, young children, O my brothers,  
They are weeping bitterly !—  
They are weeping in the playtime of the others,  
In the country of the free.

Do you question the young children in the sorrow,  
Why their tears are falling so ?—  
The old man may weep for his to-morrow  
Which is lost in Long Ago.

The old tree is leafless in the forest,  
The old year is ending in the frost,  
The old wound, if stricken, is the sorest,  
The old hope is hardest to be lost :  
But the young, young children, O my brothers,  
Do you ask them why they stand  
Weeping sore before the bosoms of their mothers,  
In our happy Fatherland ?

They look up with their pale and sunken faces,  
And their looks are sad to see,

For the man's hoary anguish draws and presses  
 Down the cheeks of infancy—  
 ' Your old earth,' they say, ' is very dreary ; '  
 ' Our young feet,' they say, ' are very weak !'  
 Few paces have we taken, yet are weary—  
 Our grave-rest is very far to seek.  
 Ask the aged why they weep, and not the  
 children ;  
 For the outside earth is cold ;  
 And we young ones stand without, in our  
 bewildering,  
 And the graves are for the old.

' True,' say the children, ' it may happen  
 That we die before our time.  
 Little Alice died last year—her grave is shapen  
 Like a snowball, in the rime.  
 We looked into the pit prepared to take her.  
 Was no room for any work in the close clay !  
 From the sleep wherein she lieth none will wake  
 her,  
 Crying, " Get up, little Alice ! it is day."  
 If you listen by that grave, in sun and shower,  
 With your ear down, little Alice never cries.  
 Could we see her face, be sure we should not  
 know her,  
 For the smile has time for growing in her eyes.  
 And merry go her moments, lulled and stilled in  
 The shroud by the kirk-chime !  
 It is good when it happens,' say the children,  
 ' That we die before our time.' . . .

' For oh,' say the children, ' we are weary,  
 And we cannot run or leap.  
 If we cared for any meadows, it were merely  
 To drop down in them and sleep.  
 Our knees tremble sorely in the stooping—  
 We fall upon our faces, trying to go ;  
 And, underneath our heavy eyelids drooping,  
 The reddest flower would look as pale as snow  
 For, all day, we drag our burden tiring  
 Through the coal-dark, underground ;

Or, all day, we drive the wheels of iron  
In the factories, round and round.

' For, all day, the wheels are droning, turning,—  
Their wind comes in our faces,—  
Till our hearts turn, our heads with pulses  
burning,

And the walls turn in their places.

Turns the sky in the high window blank and  
reeling,

Turns the long light that drops adown the wall,  
Turn the black flies that crawl along the ceiling,  
All are turning, all the day, and we with all.—  
And all day, the iron wheels are droning;

And sometimes we could pray,  
" O ye wheels " (breaking out in a mad moaning),  
" Stop ! be silent for to-day ! " "

Ay, be silent ! Let them hear each other  
breathing

For a moment, mouth to mouth !

Let them touch each other's hands, in a fresh  
wreathing

Of their tender human youth !

Let them feel that this cold metallic motion  
Is not all the life God fashions or reveals.

Let them prove their living souls against the  
notion

That they live in you, or under you, O wheels !—  
Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,

Grinding life down from its mark ;  
And the children's souls, which God is calling  
sunward,

Spin on blindly in the dark. . . .

They look up, with their pale and sunken faces,  
And their look is dread to see,

For they mind you of their angels in high places,  
With eyes turned on Deity !—

' How long,' they say, ' how long, O cruel nation,  
Will you stand, to move the world, on a child's  
heart,—

Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,  
 And tread onward to your throne amid the  
     mart ?  
 Our blood splashes upward, O gold-heaper,  
     And your purple shows your path !  
 But the child's sob in the silence curses deeper  
     Than the strong man in his wrath.'

## CLVII

*THE PET-NAME*

I have a name, a little name,  
     Uncadenced for the ear,  
 Unhonoured by ancestral claim,  
     Unsanctified by prayer and psalm  
     The solemn font anear.

It never did, to pages wove  
     For gay romance, belong.  
 It never dedicate did move  
     As 'Sacharissa,' unto love—  
     'Orinda,' unto song.

Though I write books it will be read  
     Upon the leaves of none,  
 And afterward, when I am dead,  
     Will ne'er be graved for sight or tread  
     Across my funeral-stone.

This name, whoever chance to call,  
     Perhaps your smile may win.  
 Nay, do not smile ! mine eyelids fall  
     Over mine eyes, and feel withal  
     The sudden tears within.

Is there a leaf that greenly grows  
     Where summer meadows bloom,  
 But gathereth the winter snows,  
     And changeth to the hue of those  
     If lasting till they come ?

Is there a word, or jest, or game,  
But time incrusted round  
With sad associate thoughts the same ?  
And so to me my very name  
Assumes a mournful sound.

My brother gave that name to me  
When we were children twain,—  
When names acquired baptismally  
Were hard to utter, as to see  
That life had any pain.

No shade was on us then, save one  
Of chestnuts from the hill—  
And through the wood our laugh did run  
As part thereof. The mirth being done,  
He calls me by it still.

Nay, do not smile ! I hear in it  
What none of you can hear,—  
The talk upon the willow seat,  
The bird and wind that did repeat  
Around, our human cheer.

I hear the birthday's noisy bliss,  
My sisters' woodland glee,—  
My father's praise, I did not miss,  
When stooping down he cared to kiss  
The poet at his knee,—

And voices, which, to name me, aye  
Their tenderest tones were keeping—  
To some I nevermore can say  
An answer, till God wipes away  
In heaven these drops of weeping.

My name to me a sadness wears ;  
No murmurs cross my mind :  
Now God be thanked for these thick tears,  
Which show, of those departed years,  
Sweet memories left behind !

Now God be thanked for years enwrought  
With love which softens yet !

Now God be thanked for every thought  
 Which is so tender, it has caught  
 Earth's guerdon of regret !

Earth saddens, never shall remove,  
 Affections purely given ;  
 And e'en that mortal grief shall prove  
 The immortality of love,  
 And heighten it with Heaven.

## CLVIII

*THE DESERTED GARDEN*

I mind me in the days departed,  
 How often underneath the sun  
 With childish bounds I used to run  
 To a garden long deserted.

The beds and walks were vanish'd quite ;  
 And whereso'er had struck the spade,  
 The greenest grasses Nature laid,  
 To sanctify her right.

I call'd the place my wilderness,  
 For no one enter'd there but I.  
 The sheep look'd in, the grass to espy,  
 And pass'd it ne'ertheless.

The trees were interwoven wild,  
 And spread their boughs enough about  
 To keep both sheep and shepherd out,  
 But not a happy child.

Adventurous joy it was for me !  
 I crept beneath the boughs, and found  
 A circle smooth of mossy ground  
 Beneath a poplar tree.

Old garden rose-trees hedged it in,  
 Bedropt with roses waxen-white,  
 Well satisfied with dew and light,  
 And careless to be seen.

Long years ago, it might befall,  
When all the garden flowers were trim,  
The grave old gardener prided him  
    On these the most of all.

Some Lady, stately overmuch,  
Here moving with a silken noise,  
Has blush'd beside them at the voice  
    That liken'd her to such.

Or these, to make a diadem,  
She often may have pluck'd and twined ;  
Half-smiling as it came to mind,  
    That few would look at *them*.

O, little thought that Lady proud,  
A child would watch her fair white rose,  
When buried lay her whiter brows,  
    And silk was changed for shroud !—

Nor thought that gardener (full of scorns  
For men unlearn'd and simple phrase)  
A child would bring it all its praise,  
    By creeping through the thorns !

To me upon my low moss seat,  
Though never a dream the roses sent  
Of science or love's compliment,  
    I ween they smelt as sweet.

It did not move my grief to see  
The trace of human step departed :  
Because the garden was deserted,  
    The blither place for me !

Friends, blame me not ! a narrow ken  
Hath childhood 'twixt the sun and sward :  
We draw the moral afterward—  
    We feel the gladness then.

And gladdest hours for me did glide  
In silence at the rose-tree wall :  
A thrush made gladness musical  
    Upon the other side.

Nor he nor I did e'er incline  
 To peck or pluck the blossoms white :—  
 How should I know but that they might  
     Lead lives as glad as mine ?

To make my hermit-home complete,  
 I brought clear water from the spring  
 Praised in its own low murmuring,  
     And cresses glossy wet.

And so, I thought, my likeness grew  
 (Without the melancholy tale)  
 To 'gentle hermit of the dale,'  
     And Angelina too.

For oft I read within my nook  
 Such minstrel stories ; till the breeze  
 Made sounds poetic in the trees,  
     And then I shut the book.

If I shut this wherein I write,  
 I hear no more the wind athwart  
 Those trees, nor feel that childish heart  
     Delighting in delight.

My childhood from my life is parted,  
 My footsteps from the moss which drew  
 Its fairy circle round : anew  
     The garden is deserted.

Another thrush may there rehearse  
 The madrigals which sweetest are ;  
 No more for me !—myself afar  
     Do sing a sadder verse.

Ah me ! ah me ! when erst I lay  
 In that child's-nest so greenly wrought,  
 I laugh'd unto myself and thought,  
     'The time will pass away.'

And still I laugh'd, and did not fear  
 But that, whene'er was pass'd away  
 The childish time, some happier play  
     My womanhood would cheer.

I knew the time would pass away ;  
 And yet, beside the rose-tree wall,  
 Dear God, how seldom, if at all,  
 Did I look up to pray !

The time is past : and now that grows  
 The cypress high among the trees,  
 And I behold white sepulchres  
 As well as the white rose,—

When wiser, meeker thoughts are given,  
 And I have learnt to lift my face,  
 Reminded how earth's greenest place  
 The colour draws from heaven,—

It something saith for earthly pain,  
 But more for heavenly promise free,  
 That I who was, would shrink to be  
 That happy child again.

## HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

## CLIX

*TO A CHILD*

O Child ! O new-born denizen  
 Of life's great city ! on thy head  
 The glory of the morn is shed,  
 Like a celestial benison !  
 Here at the portal thou dost stand,  
 And with thy little hand  
 Thou openest the mysterious gate  
 Into the future's undiscovered land. . .

By what astrology of fear or hope  
 Dare I to cast thy horoscope !  
 Like the new moon thy life appears ;  
 A little strip of silver light,  
 And widening outward into night  
 The shadowy disk of future years ;

And yet upon its outer rim,  
 A luminous circle, faint and dim,  
 And scarcely visible to us here,  
 Rounds and completes the perfect sphere ;  
 A prophecy and intimation,  
 A pale and feeble adumbration,  
 Of the great world of light, that lies  
 Behind all human destinies.

## CLX

*CHILDREN*

Come to me, O ye children !  
 For I hear you at your play,  
 And the questions that perplex'd me  
 Have vanished quite away.

Ye open the eastern windows,  
 That look towards the sun,  
 Where thoughts are singing swallows,  
 And the brooks of morning run.

In your hearts are the birds and the sunshine,  
 In your thoughts the brooklet's flow,  
 But in mine is the wind of Autumn,  
 And the first fall of the snow.

Ah ! what would the world be to us  
 If the children were no more ?  
 We should dread the desert behind us  
 Worse than the dark before.

What the leaves are to the forest,  
 With light and air for food,  
 Ere their sweet and tender juices  
 Have been hardened into wood,—

That to the world are children ;  
 Through them it feels the glow  
 Of a brighter and sunnier climate  
 Than reaches the trunks below.

Come to me, O ye children,  
And whisper in my ear  
What the birds and the winds are singing  
In your sunny atmosphere.

For what are all our contrivings,  
And the wisdom of our books,  
When compared with your caresses,  
And the gladness of your looks ?

Ye are better than all the ballads  
That ever were sung or said ;  
For ye are living poems,  
And all the rest are dead.

## CLXI

*THE CHILDREN'S HOUR*

Between the dark and the daylight,  
When the night is beginning to lower,  
Comes a pause in the day's occupation,  
That is known as the Children's Hour.

I hear in the chamber above me  
The patter of little feet,  
The sound of a door that is opened,  
And voices soft and sweet.

From my study I see in the lamplight,  
Descending the broad hall stair,  
Grave Alice and laughing Allegra,  
And Edith with golden hair.

A whisper and then a silence ;  
Yet I know by their merry eyes  
They are plotting and planning together  
To take me by surprise.

A sudden rush from the stairway,  
A sudden raid from the hall !  
By three doors left unguarded  
They enter my castle wall !

They climb up into my turret  
 O'er the arms and back of my chair ;  
 If I try to escape they surround me ;  
 They seem to be everywhere.

They almost devour me with kisses,  
 Their arms about me entwine,  
 Till I think of the Bishop of Bingen  
 In his Mouse Tower on the Rhine !

Do you think, O blue-eyed banditti,  
 Because you have scaled the wall,  
 Such an old moustache as I am  
 Is not a match for you all ?

I have you fast in my fortress,  
 And will not let you depart,  
 But put you down into the dungeon  
 In the round-tower of my heart.

And there will I keep you for ever,  
 Yes, for ever and a day,  
 Till the walls shall crumble to ruin,  
 And moulder in dust away !

## CLXII

*THE WRECK OF THE HESPERUS*

It was the schooner *Hesperus*,  
 That sailed the wintry sea ;  
 And the skipper had taken his little daughter  
 To bear him company.

Blue were her eyes as the fairy-flax,  
 Her cheeks like the dawn of day,  
 And her bosom white as the hawthorn buds,  
 That ope in the month of May.

The skipper he stood beside the helm,  
 His pipe was in his mouth,  
 And he watched how the veering flaw did blow  
 The smoke now West, now South.

Then up and spake an old Sailor,  
Had sailed the Spanish main,  
' I pray thee, put into yonder port,  
For I fear a hurricane.

' Last night the moon had a golden ring,  
And to-night no moon we see !'  
The skipper he blew a whiff from his pipe,  
And a scornful laugh laughed he.

Colder and louder blew the wind,  
A gale from the North-east ;  
The snow fell hissing in the brine,  
And the billows frothed like yeast.

Down came the storm, and smote amain  
The vessel in its strength ;  
She shuddered and paused, like a frighted steed,  
Then leaped her cable's length.

' Come hither ! come hither ! my little daughter,  
And do not tremble so ;  
For I can weather the roughest gale,  
That ever wind did blow.'

He wrapped her warm in his seaman's coat,  
Against the stinging blast ;  
He cut a rope from a broken spar,  
And bound her to the mast.

' O father ! I hear the church-bells ring,  
Oh, say, what may it be ?'  
' Tis a fog-bell on a rock-bound coast ! '—  
And he steered for the open sea.

' O father ! I hear the sound of guns,  
Oh, say, what may it be ?'  
' Some ship in distress that cannot live  
In such an angry sea ! '

' O father ! I see a gleaming light,  
Oh, say, what may it be ?'  
But the father answered never a word,  
A frozen corpse was he.

Lashed to the helm, all stiff and stark,  
 With his face turned to the skies,  
 The lantern gleamed through the gleaming snow  
 On his fixed and glassy eyes.

Then the maiden clasped her hands and prayed  
 That savèd she might be ;  
 And she thought of Christ, who stilled the wave,  
 On the Lake of Galilee.

And fast through the midnight dark and drear,  
 Through the whistling sleet and snow,  
 Like a sheeted ghost, the vessel swept  
 Tow'rd the reef of Norman's Woe. . . .

At daybreak, on the black sea-beach,  
 A fisherman stood aghast,  
 To see the form of a maiden fair,  
 Lashed close to a drifting mast.

The salt sea was frozen on her breast,  
 The salt tears in her eyes ;  
 And he saw her hair, like brown sea-weed,  
 On the billows fall and rise.

Such was the wreck of the *Hesperus*,  
 In the midnight and the snow ;  
 Christ save us all from a death like this,  
 On the reef of Norman's Woe !

ROBERT MONTGOMERY

CLXIII

*THE MYSTERY OF CHILDHOOD*

Something divine about an Infant seems  
 To them, who watch it in that holy light  
 Of meaning, caught from these celestial words  
 Of Christ ' Forbid them not, but let them come.'  
 Fresh buds of being ! beautiful as frail.  
 Types of that kingdom which our souls profess

To enter ! Symbols of that docile love  
 And meek compliancy of creed and mind,  
 Which Heaven hath canonized, and for its own  
 Acknowledged,—well may thoughtful hearts per-  
 ceive  
 A mystery, beyond mere nature's law,  
 Around them girdled like a moral zone.

JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER

CLXIV

*THE LITTLE PEOPLE*

A dreary place would this earth be  
 Were there no little people in it;  
 The song of life would lose its mirth,  
 Were there no children to begin it.

No little forms, like buds, to grow,  
 And make the admiring heart surrender ;  
 No little hands on breast and brow,  
 To keep the thrilling love-chords tender.

The sterner souls would grow more stern,  
 Unfeeling nature more inhuman,  
 And man to stoic coldness turn,  
 And woman would be less than woman.

Life's song, indeed, would lose its charm  
 Were there no babies to begin it ;  
 A doleful place this world would be,  
 Were there no little people in it.

CLXV

*CHILD-SONGS*

Still linger in our noon of time  
 And on our Saxon tongue  
 The echoes of the home-born hymns  
 The Aryan mothers sung.

And childhood had its litanies  
 In every age and clime ;  
 The earliest cradles of the race  
 Were rocked to poet's rhyme.

Nor sky, nor wave, nor tree, nor flower,  
 Nor green earth's virgin sod,  
 So moved the singer's heart of old  
 As these small ones of God.

The mystery of unfolding life  
 Was more than dawning morn,  
 Than opening flower or crescent moon  
 The human soul new-born !

And still to childhood's sweet appeal  
 The heart of genius turns,  
 And more than all the sages teach  
 From lisping voices learns,—

The voices loved of him who sang,  
 Where Tweed and Teviot glide,  
 That sound to-day on all the winds  
 That blow from Rydal-side,—

Heard in the Teuton's household songs,  
 And folk-lore of the Finn,  
 Where'er to holy Christmas hearths  
 The Christ-child enters ! . .

## CLXVI

*RED RIDING-HOOD*

On the wide lawn the snow lay deep  
 Ridged o'er with many a drifted heap ;  
 The wind that through the pine-trees sung,  
 The naked elm-boughs tossed and swung ;  
 While, through the window, frosty-starred  
 Against the sunset-purple barred,  
 We saw the sombre crow flap by,  
 The hawk's grey fleck along the sky,

The crested blue-jay flitting swift,  
The squirrel poising on the drift,  
Erect, alert, his broad grey tail  
Set to the north wind like a sail.

It came to pass, one little lass,  
With flattened face against the glass,  
And eyes in which the tender dew  
Of pity shone, stood gazing through  
The narrow space her rosy lips  
Had melted from the frost's eclipse ;  
' O, see,' she cried, ' the poor blue-jays !  
What is it that the black crow says ?  
The squirrel lifts his little legs  
Because he has no hands, and begs ;  
He's asking for my nuts, I know :  
May I not feed them on the snow ? '

Half lost within her boots, her head  
Warm-sheltered in her hood of red,  
Her plaid skirt close about her drawn,  
She floundered down the wintry lawn ;  
Now struggling through the misty veil  
Blown round her by the shrieking gale ;  
Now sinking in a drift so low,  
Her scarlet hood could scarcely show  
Its dash of colour on the snow.

She dropped for bird and beast forlorn  
Her little store of nuts and corn,  
And thus her timid guests bespoke :—  
' Come, squirrel, from your hollow oak—  
Come, black old crow—come, poor blue-jay,  
Before your supper's blown away !  
Don't be afraid, we all are good ;  
And I'm mamma's Red Riding-Hood ! '

O Thou, whose care is over all,  
Who heedest e'en the sparrow's fall,  
Keep in the little maiden's breast  
The pity which is now its guest !  
Let not her cultured years make less  
The childhood charm of tenderness,

But let her feel as well as know,  
Nor harder with her polish grow !—  
Unmoved by sentimental grief  
That wails along some printed leaf,  
But prompt with kindly word and deed  
To own the claims of all who need ;  
Let the grown woman's self make good  
The promise of Red Riding-Hood !

## CLXVII

*VESTA*

O Christ of God ! whose life and death  
Our own have reconciled,  
Most quietly, most tenderly  
Take home thy star-named child !

Thy grace is in her patient eyes,  
Thy words are on her tongue ;  
The very silence round her seems  
As if the angels sung.

Her smile is as a listening child's  
Who hears its mother call ;  
The lilies of Thy perfect peace  
About her pillow fall.

She leans from out our clinging arms  
To rest herself in Thine ;  
Alone to Thee, dear Lord, can we  
Our well-beloved resign !

O, less for her than for ourselves  
We bow our heads and pray ;  
Her setting star, like Bethlehem's  
To Thee shall point the way !

CHARLES TENNYSON-TURNER

## CLXVIII

*LETTY'S GLOBE*

When Letty had scarce passed her third glad year,  
 And her young, artless words began to flow,  
 One day we gave the child a coloured sphere  
 Of the wide earth, that she might mark and know,  
 By tint and outline, all its sea and land.  
 She patted all the world ; old empires peeped  
 Between her baby fingers ; her soft hand  
 Was welcome at all frontiers. How she leaped,  
 And laughed, and prattled in her world-wide  
 bliss ;  
 But when we turned her sweet unlearnèd eye  
 On our own isle, she raised a joyous cry,  
 ' Oh ! yes, I see it, Letty's home is there ! '  
 And, while she hid all England with a kiss,  
 Bright over Europe fell her golden hair.

## CLXIX

*LITTLE SOPHY BY THE SEASIDE*

Young Sophy leads a life without alloy  
 Of pain ; she dances in the stormy air ;  
 While her pink sash and length of golden hair  
 With answering motion time her step of joy !

Now turns she through that seaward gate of heaven,  
 That opens on the sward above the cliff,—  
 Glancing a moment at each barque and skiff,  
 Along the roughening waters homeward driven ;  
 Shoreward she hies, her wooden spade in hand,  
 Straight down to childhood's ancient field of play,

To claim her right of common in the land  
 Where little edgeless tools make easy way—  
 A right no cruel Act shall e'er gainsay,  
 No greed dispute the freedom of the sand.

## CLXX

*LITTLE MARY AND THE CHILD  
MUMMY*

When the four quarters of the world shall rise,  
 Men, women, children, at the Judgment-time,  
 Perchance this Memphian girl, dead ere her  
 prime,

Shall drop her mask, and with dark new-born  
 eyes

Salute our English Mary, loved and lost ;  
 The Father knows her little scroll of prayer,  
 And life as pure as His Egyptian air ;  
 For, though she knew not Jesus, nor the cost  
 At which He won the world, she learn'd to pray ;  
 And though our own sweet babe on Christ's  
 good name

Spent her last breath, premonish'd and advised  
 Of Him, and in His glorious Church baptized,  
 She will not spurn this old-world child away,  
 Nor put her poor embalmèd heart to shame.

## CLXXI

*HER FIRST SWEET CHILD*

It was her first sweet child, her heart's delight :  
 And, though we all foresaw his early doom,  
 We kept the fearful secret out of sight ;  
 We saw the canker, but she kissed the bloom.

And yet it might not be : we could not brook  
 To vex her happy heart with vague alarms,  
 To blanch with fear her fond intrepid look,  
 Or send a thrill through those encircling arms.

She smiled upon him, waking or at rest :  
 She could not dream her little child would die :  
 She toss'd him fondly with an upward eye :  
 She seem'd as buoyant as a summer spray,  
 That dances with a blossom on its breast,  
 Nor knows how soon it will be borne away.

RICHARD MONCKTON MILNES, LORD  
 HOUGHTON

CLXXII

*CARPE DIEM*

Youth, that pursuest with such eager pace  
 Thy even way,  
 Thou pantest on to win a mournful race :  
 Then stay ! oh, stay !

Pause and luxuriate in thy sunny plain ;  
 Loiter,—enjoy !  
 Once past, thou never wilt come back again,  
 A second Boy.

The hills of Manhood wear a noble face,  
 When seen from far ;  
 The mist of light from which they take their  
 grace  
 Hides what they are.

The dark and weary path those cliffs between  
 Thou canst not know,  
 And how it leads to regions never-green,  
 Dead fields of snow.

Pause, while thou mayst, nor deem that fate thy  
 gain  
 Which, all too fast,  
 Will drive thee forth from this delicious plain,  
 A Man at last.

ALFRED TENNYSON, LORD TENNYSON

CLXXXIII

*THE BABY*

The baby new to earth and sky,  
 What time his tender palm is prest  
 Against the circle of the breast,  
 Has never thought that ' this is I ':

But as he grows he gathers much,  
 And learns the use of ' I,' and ' me,'  
 And finds ' I am not what I see,  
 And other than the things I touch.'

So rounds he to a separate mind  
 From whence clear memory may begin,  
 As thro' the frame that binds him in  
 His isolation grows defined.

This use may lie in blood and breath,  
 Which else were fruitless of their due,  
 Had man to learn himself anew  
 Beyond the second birth of Death.

CLXXXIV

*DE PROFUNDIS*

THE TWO GREETINGS

*To H. T. August 11, 1852*

I

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
 Where all that was to be, in all that was,  
 Whirl'd for a million æons thro' the vast  
 Waste dawn of multitudinous-eddying light—  
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
 Thro' all this changing world of changeless law,  
 And every phase of ever-heightening life,

And nine long months of antenatal gloom,  
 With this last moon, this crescent—her dark orb  
 Touch'd with earth's light—thou comest, darling  
 boy ;

Our own ; a babe in lineament and limb  
 Perfect, and prophet of the perfect man ;  
 Whose face and form are hers and mine in one,  
 Indissolubly married like our love ;  
 Live, and be happy in thyself, and serve  
 This mortal race thy kin so well, that men  
 May bless thee as we bless thee, O young life  
 Breaking with laughter from the dark ; and may  
 The fated channel where thy motion lives  
 Be prosperously shaped, and sway thy course  
 Along the years of haste and random youth  
 Unshatter'd ; then full-current thro' full man :  
 And last in kindly curves, with gentlest fall,  
 By quiet fields, a slowly-dying power,  
 To that last deep where we and thou are still.

## II

## I

Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
 From that great deep, before our world begins,  
 Whereon the Spirit of God moves as He will—  
 Out of the deep, my child, out of the deep,  
 From that true world within the world we see,  
 Whereof our world is but the bounding shore—  
 Out of the deep, Spirit, out of the deep,  
 With this ninth moon, that sends the hidden  
 sun  
 Down yon dark sea, thou comest, darling boy.

## II

For in the world, which is not ours, They said  
 ' Let us make man ' and that which should be  
 man,  
 From that one light no man can look upon,  
 Drew to this shore lit by the suns and moons

And all the shadows. O dear Spirit half-lost  
 In thine own shadow and this fleshly sign  
 That thou art thou—who wailest being born  
 And banish'd into mystery, and the pain  
 Of this divisible-indivisible world  
 Among the numerable-innumerable  
 Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite space  
 In finite-infinite Time—our mortal veil  
 And shatter'd phantom of that infinite One,  
 Who made thee unconceivably Thyself  
 Out of His whole World-self and all in all—  
 Live thou! and of the grain and husk, the  
 grape  
 And ivyberry, choose; and still depart  
 From death to death thro' life and life, and  
 find  
 Nearer and ever nearer Him, who wrought  
 Not Matter, nor the finite-infinite,  
 But this main-miracle, that thou art thou,  
 With power on thine own act and on the world.

## CLXXV

*ULLABY*

‘Sleep, little birdie, sleep! will she not sleep  
 Without her “little birdie”? well then, sleep,  
 And I will sing you “birdie.”’

Saying this,  
 The woman half-turn’d round from him she  
 loved,  
 Left him one hand, and reaching thro’ the night  
 Her other, found (for it was close beside)  
 And half-embraced the basket cradle-head  
 With one soft arm, which, like the pliant bough  
 That moving moves the nest and nestling,  
 sway’d  
 The cradle, while she sang this baby song.

What does little birdie say  
 In her nest at peep of day?

Let me fly, says little birdie,  
Mother, let me fly away.  
Birdie, rest a little longer,  
Till the little wings are stronger.  
So she rests a little longer,  
Then she flies away.

What does little baby say,  
In her bed at peep of day ?  
Baby says, like little birdie,  
Let me rise and fly away.  
Baby, sleep a little longer,  
Till the little limbs are stronger.  
If she sleeps a little longer,  
Baby too shall fly away.

## CLXXVI

*SWEET AND LOW*

Sweet and low, sweet and low,  
Wind of the western sea,  
Low, low, breathe and blow,  
Wind of the western sea !  
Over the rolling waters go,  
Come from the dying moon, and blow,  
Blow him again to me ;  
While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,  
Father will come to thee soon ;  
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,  
Father will come to thee soon ;  
Father will come to his babe in the nest,  
Silver sails all out of the west  
Under the silver moon :  
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

## CLXXVII

*THE CITY CHILD*

Dainty little maiden, whither would you wander ?  
 Whither from this pretty home, the home  
 where mother dwells ?

' Far and far away,' said the dainty little maiden,  
 ' All among the gardens, auriculas, anemones,  
 Roses and lilies and Canterbury-bells.'

Dainty little maiden, whither would you wander ?  
 Whither from this pretty house, this city-  
 house of ours ?

' Far and far away,' said the dainty little maiden,  
 ' All among the meadows, the clover and the  
 clematis,  
 Daisies and kingcups and honeysuckle-flowers.'

## CLXXVIII

*IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL*

EMMIE

## I

Our doctor had call'd in another, I never had  
 seen him before,  
 But he sent a chill to my heart when I saw him  
 come in at the door,  
 Fresh from the surgery-schools of France and  
 of other lands—  
 Harsh red hair, big voice, big chest, big merci-  
 less hands !  
 Wonderful cures he had done, O yes, but they  
 said too of him  
 He was happier using the knife than in trying  
 to save the limb,  
 And that I can well believe, for he look'd so  
 coarse and so red,  
 I could think he was one of those who would  
 break their jests on the dead,

And mangle the living dog that had loved him  
and fawn'd at his knee—  
Drench'd with the hellish oorali—that ever such  
things should be !

## II

Here was a boy—I am sure that some of our  
children would die  
But for the voice of Love, and the smile, and  
the comforting eye—  
Here was a boy in the ward, every bone seem'd  
out of its place—  
Caught in a mill and crush'd—it was all but a  
hopeless case :  
And he handled him gently enough ; but his  
voice and his face were not kind,  
And it was but a hopeless case, he had seen it  
and made up his mind,  
And he said to me roughly, ‘ The lad will need  
little more of your care.’  
‘ All the more need,’ I told him, ‘ to seek the  
Lord Jesus in prayer ;  
They are all His children here, and I pray for  
them all as my own ’:  
But he turn'd to me, ‘ Ay, good woman, can  
prayer set a broken bone ? ’  
Then he mutter'd half to himself, but I know  
that I heard him say  
‘ All very well—but the good Lord Jesus has  
had His day.’

## III

Had ? has it come ? It has only dawn'd. It  
will come by and by.  
O how could I serve in the wards if the hope of  
the world were a lie ?  
How could I bear with the sights and the loath-  
some smells of disease  
But that He said ‘ Ye do it to Me, when ye do  
it to these ’ ?

## IV

So he went. And we past to this ward where  
 the younger children are laid :  
 Here is the cot of our orphan, our darling, our  
 meek little maid ;  
 Empty you see just now ! We have lost her  
 who loved her so much—  
 Patient of pain tho' as quick as a sensitive plant  
 to the touch ;  
 Hers was the prettiest prattle, it often moved  
 me to tears,  
 Hers was the gratefullest heart I have found  
 in a child of her years—  
 Nay you remember our Emmie ; you used to  
 send her the flowers ;  
 How she would smile at 'em, play with 'em,  
 talk to 'em hours after hours !  
 They that can wander at will where the works  
 of the Lord are reveal'd  
 Little guess what joy can be got from a cowslip  
 out of the field ;  
 Flowers to these ' spirits in prison ' are all they  
 can know of the spring,  
 They freshen and sweeten the wards like the  
 waft of an Angel's wing ;  
 And she lay with a flower in one hand and her  
 thin hands crost on her breast—  
 Wan, but as pretty as heart can desire, and we  
 thought her at rest,  
 Quietly sleeping—so quiet, our doctor said ' Poor  
 little dear,'  
 Nurse, I must do it to-morrow ; she'll never  
 live thro' it, I fear.'

## V

I walk'd with our kindly old doctor as far as  
 the head of the stair,  
 Then I return'd to the ward ; the child didn't  
 see I was there.

## VI

Never since I was nurse, had I been so grieved  
and so vext !  
 Emmie had heard him. Softly she call'd from  
her cot to the next,  
 ' He says I shall never live thro' it, O Annie,  
what shall I do ?'  
 Annie consider'd. ' If I,' said the wise little  
Annie, ' was you,  
 I should cry to the dear Lord Jesus to help me,  
for, Emmie, you see,  
 It's all in the picture there : " Little children  
should come to Me."'  
 (Meaning the print that you gave us, I find  
that it always can please  
 Our children, the dear Lord Jesus with children  
about His knees.)  
 ' Yes, and I will,' said Emmie, ' but then if I  
call to the Lord,  
 How should He know that it's me ? such a lot  
of beds in the ward !'  
 That was a puzzle for Annie. Again she con-  
sider'd and said :  
 ' Emmie, you put out your arms, and you leave  
'em outside on the bed—  
 The Lord has so *much* to see to ! but, Emmie,  
you tell it Him plain,  
 It's the little girl with her arms lying out on the  
counterpane.'

## VII

I had sat three nights by the child—I could not  
watch her for four—  
 My brain had begun to reel—I felt I could do it  
no more.  
 That was my sleeping-night, but I thought that  
it never would pass.  
 There was a thunderclap once, and a clatter of  
hail on the glass,  
 And there was a phantom cry that I heard as  
I tost about,

The motherless bleat of a lamb in the storm  
 and the darkness without ;  
 My sleep was broken besides with dreams of  
 the dreadful knife  
 And fears for our delicate Emmie who scarce  
 would escape with her life ;  
 Then in the gray of the morning it seem'd she  
 stood by me and smiled,  
 And the doctor came at his hour, and we went  
 to see to the child.

## VIII

He had brought his ghastly tools : we believed  
 her asleep again—  
 Her dear, long, lean, little arms lying out on the  
 counterpane ;  
 Say that His day is done ! Ah why should we  
 care what they say ?  
 The Lord of the children had heard her, and  
 Emmie had past away.

## CLXXXIX

*LAMENT*

‘ Ah me, my babe, my blossom, ah, my child,  
 My one sweet child, whom I shall see no more !  
 For now will cruel Ida keep her back ;  
 And either she will die from want of care,  
 Or sicken with ill-usage, when they say  
 The child is hers—for every little fault,  
 The child is hers ; and they will beat my girl  
 Remembering her mother : O my flower !  
 Or they will take her, they will make her hard,  
 And she will pass me by in after-life  
 With some cold reverence worse than were she  
 dead.  
 Ill mother that I was to leave her there,  
 To lag behind, scared by the cry they made,  
 The horror of the shame among them all :

But I will go and sit beside the doors,  
 And make a wild petition night and day,  
 Until they hate to hear me like a wind  
 Wailing for ever, till they open to me,  
 And lay my little blossom at my feet,  
 My babe, my sweet Aglaïa, my one child :  
 And I will take her up and go my way,  
 And satisfy my soul with kissing her :  
 Ah ! what might that man not deserve of me  
 Who gave me back my child ? '

## CLXX :

## THE LITTLE GRAVE

As thro' the land at eve we went,  
 And pluck'd the ripen'd ears,  
 We fell out, my wife and I,  
 O we fell out, I know not why,  
 And kiss'd again with tears.  
 And blessings on the falling out  
 That all the more endears,  
 When we fall out with those we love  
 And kiss again with tears !  
 For when we came where lies the child  
 We lost in other years,  
 There above the little grave,  
 O there above the little grave,  
 We kiss'd again with tears.

JOHN SWANWICK DRENNAN

## CLXXXI

*ANGELS*

Angels embrace us daily and obey ;  
 We call them ' children,' and account our own ;  
 Find they had wings when they have fled away,  
 And know they were of Heaven when thither  
 gone.

## HENRY ALFORD

CLXXXII

*HOLY BAPTISM*

In token that thou shalt not fear  
 Christ crucified to own,  
 We print the Cross upon thee here,  
 And stamp thee His alone.

In token that thou shalt not blush  
 To glory in His name,  
 We blazon here upon thy front  
 His glory and His shame.

In token that thou shalt not flinch  
 Christ's quarrel to maintain,  
 But 'neath His Banner manfully  
 Firm at thy post remain ;

In token that thou too shalt tread  
 The path He travelled by,  
 Endure the Cross, despise the shame,  
 And sit thee down on high ;

Thus outwardly and visibly  
 We seal thee for His own ;  
 And may the brow that wears His Cross  
 Hereafter share His Crown.

## WILLIAM MILLER

CLXXXIII

*WILLIE WINKIE*

Wee Willie Winkie rins through the town,  
 Up stairs and doon stairs in his nicht-gown,  
 Tirling at the window, crying at the lock,  
 ' Are the weans in their bed, for it's now ten  
 o'clock ? '

' Hey, Willie Winkie, are ye coming ben ?  
 The cat's singing grey thrums to the sleeping hen,  
 The dog's spelder'd on the floor, and disna gi'e  
     a cheep,  
 But here's a waukrife laddie ! that winna fa'  
     asleep.'

Onything but sleep, you rogue ! glow'ring like  
     the moon,  
 Rattling in an airn jug wi' an airn spoon,  
 Rumbling, tumbling round about, crawling like  
     a cock,  
 Skirling like a kenna-what, wauk'ning sleeping  
     folk.

' Hey, Willie Winkie,—the wean's in a creel !  
 Wambling aff a bodie's knee like a very eel,  
 Rugging at the cat's lug, and ravelling a' her  
     thrums—  
 Hey, Willie Winkie,—see, there he comes ! '

Wearied is the mither that has a stoorie wean,  
 A wee stumpie stoussie, that canna rin his lane,  
 That has a battle aye wi' sleep before he'll close  
     an e'e—  
 But a kiss frae aff his rosy lips gi'es strength  
     anew to me.

ROBERT BROWNING

CLXXXIV

*THE GUARDIAN ANGEL*  
*A Picture at Fano*

Dear and great Angel, wouldest thou only leave  
 That child, when thou hast done with him,  
     for me !  
 Let me sit all the day here, that when eve  
     Shall find performed thy special ministry,  
 And time come for departure, thou, suspending

Thy flight, mayst see another child for tending,  
Another still, to quiet and retrieve.

Then I shall feel thee step one step, no more,  
From where thou standest now, to where I  
gaze,

—And suddenly my head is covered o'er  
With those wings, white above the child who  
prays

Now on that tomb — and I shall feel thee  
guarding

Me, out of all the world ; for me, discarding  
Yon heaven thy home, that waits and opes  
its door.

I would not look up thither past thy head  
Because the door opes, like that child, I know,  
For I should have thy gracious face instead,  
Thou bird of God ! And wilt thou bend me  
low

Like him, and lay, like his, my hands together,  
And lift them up to pray, and gently tether  
Me, as thy lamb there, with thy garment's  
spread ?

If this was ever granted, I would rest  
My head beneath thine, while thy healing  
hands

Close-covered both my eyes beside thy breast,  
Pressing the brain, which too much thought  
expands,

Back to its proper size again, and smoothing  
Distortion down till every nerve had soothing,  
And all lay quiet, happy and suppressed.

How soon all worldly wrong would be repaired !  
I think how I should view the earth and skies  
And sea, when once again my brow was bared  
After thy healing, with such different eyes.  
O world, as God has made it ! All is beauty :  
And knowing this, is love, and love is duty.  
What further may be sought for or declared ?

Guercino drew this angel I saw teach  
 (Alfred, dear friend !)—that little child to pray,  
 Holding the little hands up, each to each  
 Pressed gently,—with his own head turned  
 away  
 Over the earth where so much lay before him  
 Of work to do, though heaven was opening o'er  
 him,  
 And he was left at Fano by the beach.

We were at Fano, and three times we went  
 To sit and see him in his chapel there,  
 And drink his beauty to our soul's content  
 —My angel with me too : and since I care  
 For dear Guercino's fame (to which in power  
 And glory comes this picture for a dower,  
 Fraught with a pathos so magnificent)—  
 And since he did not work thus earnestly  
 At all times, and has else endured some wrong—  
 I took one thought his picture struck from me,  
 And spread it out, translating it to song.  
 My love is here. Where are you, dear old friend ?  
 How rolls the Wairoa at your world's far end ?  
 This is Ancona, yonder is the sea.

## CLXXXV

*PIPPA'S SONG*

Overhead the tree-tops meet,  
 Flowers and grass spring 'neath one's feet ;  
 There was nought above me, nought below,  
 My childhood had not learned to know :  
 For, what are the voices of birds  
 —Ay, and of beasts,—but words, our words,  
 Only so much more sweet ?  
 The knowledge of that with my life begun.  
 But I had so near made out the sun,  
 And counted your stars, the seven and one,  
 Like the fingers of my hand :  
 Nay, I could all but understand

Wherefore through heaven the white moon  
ranges ;  
And just when out of her soft fifty changes  
No unfamiliar face might overlook me—  
Suddenly God took me.

## AUBREY DE VERE

CLXXXVI

*A CONVENT SCHOOL IN A  
CORRUPT CITY*

Hark how they laugh, those children at their sport !  
O'er all this city vast, that knows not sleep,  
Labour and sin their ceaseless vigil keep :  
Yet hither still good angels make resort.  
Innocence here and Mirth a single fort  
Maintain : and though in many a snake-like sweep  
Corruption round the weedy walls doth creep,  
Its track not yet hath slimed this sunny court.  
Glory to God, who so the world hath framed  
That in all places children more abound  
Than they by whom Humanity is shamed !  
Children outnumber men : and millions die—  
Who knows not this ?—in blameless infancy,  
Sowing with innocence our sin-stained ground

## EMILY BRONTË

CLXXXVII

*TELL ME, TELL ME, SMILING CHILD*

Tell me, tell me, smiling child,  
What the past is like to thee.  
—An autumn evening, soft and mild,  
With a wind that sighs mournfully.

Tell me what is the present hour.  
 —A green and flowery spray,  
 Where the young bird sits gathering its power  
 To mount and fly away.

And what is the future, happy one ?  
 —A sea beneath a cloudless sun :  
 A mighty, glorious, dazzling sea  
 Stretching into infinity.

GEORGE ELIOT

CLXXXVIII

*BROTHER AND SISTER*

I cannot choose but think upon the time  
 When our two lives grew like two buds that kiss  
 At lightest thrill from the bee's swinging chime,  
 Because the one so near the other is.

He was the elder and a little man  
 Of forty inches, bound to show no dread,  
 And I the girl that puppy-like now ran,  
 Now lagged behind my brother's larger tread.

I held him wise, and when he talked to me  
 Of snakes and birds, and which God loved the  
 best,

I thought his knowledge marked the boundary  
 Where men grew blind, though angels knew the  
 rest.

If he said ' Hush ! ' I tried to hold my breath.  
 Wherever he said ' Come ! ' I stepped in faith.

Long years have left their writing on my brow,  
 But yet the freshness and the dew-fed beam  
 Of those young mornings are about me now,  
 When we two wandered toward the far-off  
 stream

With rod and line. Our basket held a store  
 Baked for us only, and I thought with joy

That I should have my share, though he had more,  
Because he was the elder and a boy.

The firmaments of daisies since to me  
Have had those mornings in their opening eyes,  
The bunched cowslip's pale transparency  
Carries that sunshine of sweet memories.

And wild-rose branches take their finest scent  
From those blest hours of infantine content. . . .

Our meadow-path had memorable spots :  
One where it bridged a tiny rivulet,  
Deep hid by tangled blue forget-me-nots ;  
And all along the waving grasses met

My little palm, or nodded to my cheek,  
When flowers with upturned faces gazing drew  
My wonder downward, seeming all to speak  
With eyes of souls that dumbly heard and knew.

Then came the copse, where wild things rushed  
unseen,  
And black-scarred grass betrayed the past abode  
Of mystic gypsies, who still lurked between  
Me and each hidden distance of the road.

A gypsy once had startled me at play,  
Blotting with her dark smile my sunny day. . . .

Our brown canal was endless to my thought ;  
And on its banks I sat in dreamy peace, . . .  
Unknowing how the good I loved was wrought,  
Untroubled by the fear that it would cease.

Slowly the barges floated into view  
Rounding a grassy hill, to me sublime  
With some Unknown beyond it, whither flew  
The parting cuckoo toward a fresh spring time.

The wide-arched bridge, the scented elder-flowers,  
The wondrous watery rings that died too soon,  
The echoes of the quarry, the still hours  
With white robe sweeping on the shadeless noon,

Were but my growing self, are part of me,  
My present Past, my root of piety. . . .

We had the self-same world, enlarged for each  
By loving difference of girl and boy :  
The fruit that hung on high beyond my reach  
He plucked for me, and oft he must employ

A measuring glance to guide my tiny shoe  
Where lay firm stepping-stones, or call to mind  
' This thing I like my sister may not do,  
For she is little, and I must be kind.'

Thus boyish Will the nobler mastery learned  
Where inward vision over impulse reigns,  
Widening its life with separate life discerned,  
A Like unlike, a Self that self-restrains.

His years with others must the sweeter be  
For those brief days he spent in loving me.

His sorrow was my sorrow, and his joy  
Sent little leaps and laughs through all my  
frame ;  
My doll seemed lifeless, and no girlish toy  
Had any reason, when my brother came.

I knelt with him at marbles, marked his fling  
Cut the ringed stem and make the apple drop,  
Or watched him winding close the spiral string  
That looped the orbits of the humming top.

Grasped by such fellowship my vagrant thought  
Ceased with dream-fruit dream-wishes to fulfil ;  
My aëry-picturing fantasy was taught  
Subjection to the harder, truer skill

That seeks with deeds to grave a thought-  
tracked line,  
And by ' What is,' ' What will be ' to define.

School parted us ; we never found again  
That childish world where our two spirits mingled  
Like scents from varying roses that remain  
One sweetness, nor can evermore be singled.

Yet the twin habit of that early time  
 Lingered for long about the heart and tongue :  
 We had been natives of one happy clime,  
 And its dear accent to our utterance clung.

Till the dire years whose awful name is Change  
 Had grasped our souls still yearning in divorce,  
 And pitiless shaped them in two forms that range  
 Two elements which sever their life's course.

But were another childhood-world my share,  
 I would be born a little sister there.

## CHARLES KINGSLEY

CLXXXIX

*A FAREWELL*

My fairest child, I have no song to give you ;  
 No lark could pipe to skies so dull and grey :  
 Yet, ere we part, one lesson I can leave you  
 For every day.

Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever ;  
 Do noble things, not dream them, all day  
 long :  
 And so make life, death, and that vast for-ever  
 One grand, sweet song.

## JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

cxc

*TO THE DANDELION*

Dear common flower, that grow'st beside the  
 way,  
 Fringing the dusty road with harmless gold,  
 First pledge of blithesome May,  
 Which children pluck, and, full of pride uphold.

High-hearted buccaneers, o'erjoyed that they  
 An Eldorado in the grass have found,  
 Which not the rich earth's ample round  
 May match in wealth, thou art more dear  
 to me  
 Than all the prouder summer-blooms may  
 be. . . .

My childhood's earliest thoughts are linked  
 with thee;  
 The sight of thee calls back the robin's song,  
 Who, from the dark old tree  
 Beside the door, sang clearly all day long,  
 And I, secure in childish piety,  
 Listened as if I heard an angel sing  
 With news from heaven, which he could bring  
 Fresh every day to my untainted ears,  
 When birds and flowers and I were happy  
 peers.

How like a prodigal doth Nature seem  
 When thou, for all thy gold, so common art!  
 Thou teachest me to deem  
 More sacredly of every human heart,  
 Since each reflects in joy its scanty gleam  
 Of heaven, and could some wondrous secret  
 show,  
 Did we but pay the love we owe,  
 And with a child's undoubting wisdom look  
 On all these living pages of God's book.

## cxci

*THE FIRST SNOW-FALL*

The snow had begun in the gloaming,  
 And busily all the night  
 Had been heaping field and highway  
 With a silence deep and white. . . .

I stood and watched by the window  
 The noiseless work of the sky,

And the sudden flurries of snow-birds,  
Like brown leaves whirling by.

I thought of a mound in sweet Auburn,  
Where a little headstone stood ;  
How the flakes were folding it gently,  
As did robins the babes in the wood.

Up spoke our own little Mabel,  
Saying, ‘ Father, who makes it snow ? ’  
And I told of the good All-father  
Who cares for us here below.

Again I looked at the snow-fall,  
And thought of the leaden sky  
That arched o'er our first great sorrow,  
When that mound was heaped so high.

I remembered the gradual patience  
That fell from that cloud like snow,  
Flake by flake, healing and hiding  
The scar of our deep-plunged woe.

And again to the child I whispered,  
‘ The snow that husheth all,  
Darling, the merciful Father  
Alone can make it fall ! ’

Then, with eyes that saw not, I kissed her ;  
And she, kissing back, could not know  
That *my* kiss was given to her sister,  
Folded close under deepening snow.

WALT WHITMAN

CXCII

*THERE WAS A CHILD WENT FORTH*

There was a child went forth every day,  
And the first object that he look'd upon, that  
object he became,

And that object became part of him for the day  
or a certain part of the day,  
Or for many years or stretching cycles of years.

The early lilacs became part of this child,  
The grass and white and red morning-glories,  
and white and red clover, and the song of  
the phoebe-bird,  
And the Third-month lambs and the sow's pink-  
faint litter, and the mare's foal and the  
cow's calf,  
And the noisy brood of the barnyard or by the  
mire of the pond-side,  
And the fish suspending themselves so curiously  
below there, and the beautiful curious  
liquid,  
And the water plants with their graceful flat  
heads, all became part of him.

The field-sprouts of Fourth-month and Fifth-  
month became part of him,  
Winter-grain sprouts and those of the light-  
yellow corn, and the esculent roots of the  
garden,  
And the apple-trees cover'd with blossoms and  
the fruit afterward, and wood-berries, and  
the commonest weeds by the road,  
And the old drunkard staggering home from the  
outhouse of the tavern whence he had lately  
risen,  
And the schoolmistress that pass'd on her way  
to the school,  
And the friendly boys that pass'd, and the  
quarrelsome boys,  
And the tidy and fresh-cheek'd girls, and the  
barefoot negro boy and girl,  
And all the changes of city and country wher-  
ever he went.

His own parents, he that had father'd him and  
she that had conceiv'd him in her womb  
and birth'd him,

They gave this child more of themselves than that,  
They gave him afterward every day, they became  
part of him.

The mother at home quietly placing the dishes  
on the supper-table,

The mother with mild words, clean cap and  
gown, a wholesome odour falling off her  
person and clothes as she walks by,

The father, strong, self-sufficient, manly, mean,  
anger'd, unjust,

The blow, the quick loud word, the tight bar-  
gain, the crafty lure,

The family usages, the language, the company, the  
furniture, the yearning and swelling heart,

Affection that will not be gainsay'd, the sense  
of what is real, the thought if after all it  
should prove unreal,

The doubts of day-time and the doubts of night-  
time, the curious whether and how,

Whether that which appears so is so, or is it all  
flashes and specks ?

Men and women crowding fast in the streets, if  
they are not flashes and specks what are  
they ?

The streets themselves and the façades of houses,  
and goods in the windows,

Vehicles, teams, the heavy-plank'd wharves, the  
huge crossing at the ferries,

The village on the highland seen from afar at  
sunset, the river between,

Shadows, aureola and mist, the light falling on  
roofs and gables of white or brown two miles  
off,

The schooner near by sleepily dropping down  
the tide, the little boat slack-tow'd astern,

The hurrying tumbling waves, quick-broken  
crests, slapping,

The strata of colour'd clouds, the long bar of  
maroon-tint away solitary by itself, the  
spread of purity it lies motionless in,

The horizon's edge, the flying sea-crow, the  
 fragrance of salt marsh and shore mud,  
 These became part of that child who went forth  
 every day, and who now goes, and will  
 always go forth every day.

JEAN INGELOW

CXCIII

## SEVEN TIMES ONE

There's no dew left on the daisies and clover,  
 There's no rain left in heaven :  
 I've said my ' seven times ' over and over,  
 Seven times one are seven.

I am old, so old, I can write a letter ;  
 My birthday lessons are done ;  
 The lambs play always, they know no better ;  
 They are only one times one.

O moon ! in the night I have seen you sailing  
 And shining so round and low ;  
 You were bright ! ah bright ! but your light is  
 failing—  
 You are nothing now but a bow.

You moon, have you done something wrong in  
 heaven  
 That God has hidden your face ?  
 I hope if you have you will soon be forgiven,  
 And shine again in your place.

O velvet bee, you're a dusty fellow,  
 You've powdered your legs with gold !  
 O brave marsh marybuds, rich and yellow,  
 Give me your money to hold !

O columbine, open your folded wrapper,  
 Where two twin turtle-doves dwell !  
 O cuckoopint, toll me the purple clapper  
 That hangs in your clear green bell !

And show me your nest with the young ones in it ;  
 I will not steal them away ;  
 I am old ! you may trust me, linnet, linnet—  
 I am seven times one to-day.

## CXCIV

*THE SNOWDROP MONUMENT*  
*(In Lichfield Cathedral)*

Marvels of sleep grown cold !  
 Who hath not longed to fold  
 With pitying ruth, forgetful of their bliss,  
 Those cherub forms that lie,  
 With none to watch them nigh,  
 Or touch the silent lips with one warm human  
 kiss ?

What ! they are left alone  
 All night with graven stone,  
 Pillars and arches that above them meet ;  
 While through those windows high  
 The journeying stars can spy,  
 And dim blue moonbeams drop on their un-  
 covered feet !

O cold ! yet look again,  
 There is a wandering vein  
 Traced in the hand where those white snowdrops  
 lie.  
 Let her wrapt dreamy smile  
 The wondering heart beguile,  
 That almost thinks to hear a calm contented sigh.

What silence dwells between  
 Those severed lips serene !  
 The rapture of sweet waiting breathes and grows ;  
 What trance-like peace is shed  
 On her reclining head,  
 And e'en on listless feet what languor of repose !  
 Angels of joy and love  
 Lean softly from above

And whisper to her sweet and marvellous things ;  
Tell of the golden gate  
That opened wide doth wait,  
And shadow her dim sleep with their celestial wings.

Hearing of that blest shore . . .  
She thinks on earth no more,  
Contented to forego this wintry land.  
She hath nor thought nor care  
But to rest calmly there,  
And hold the snowdrops pale that blossom in  
her hand.

But on the other face  
Broodeth a mournful grace ;  
This had foreboding thoughts beyond her years ;  
While sinking thus to sleep  
She saw her mother weep,  
And could not lift her hand to dry those heart-sick tears.

Could not—but failing lay,  
Sighed her young life away,  
And let her arm drop down in listless rest,  
Too weary on that bed  
To turn her dying head,  
Or fold the little sister nearer to her breast.

Yet this is faintly told  
On features fair and cold,  
A look of calm surprise, of mild regret,  
As if with life oppressed  
She turned her to her rest,  
But felt her mother's love and looked not to forget.

How wistfully they close,  
Sweet eyes, to their repose !  
How quietly declines the placid brow !  
The young lips seem to say,  
' I have wept much to-day,  
And felt some bitter pains, but they are over  
now.'

Sleep ! there are left below  
 Many who pine to go,  
 Many who lay it to their chastened souls  
 That gloomy days draw nigh,  
 And they are blest who die,  
 For this green world grows worse the longer that  
 she rolls.

And as for me, I know  
 A little of her woe,  
 Her yearning want doth in my soul abide,  
 And sighs of them that weep,  
 'O put us soon to sleep,  
 For when we wake—with Thee—we shall be  
 satisfied.'

## DORA GREENWELL

CXCV

## CHILDHOOD'S WORLD

My world was then like His that first  
 A happy garden knew,  
 Unworn, and fresh, and glistening bright  
 With shining spheres of dew ;  
 My soul was full of light that passed  
 As through a tinctured pane  
 In warm and vermeil hues, and cast  
 On all its gorgeous stain ;  
 The dial on its grassy mound  
 That silent marked the hours,  
 (Time's footfall then awoke no sound  
 That only trod on flowers)  
 The sun-flowers and the moon-flowers  
 (These were lilies white and tall),  
 The ancient griffins that looked down  
 Upon me from the wall ;  
 These were for tokens unto me  
 And signs, they seemed to pass

Into my life as then I lay  
At noon-day on the grass,  
And twined a wondrous history  
Slow twisting, branch and stem,  
My garlands, binding all the while  
My Being up with them ;  
And I knew that in the wild-wood  
'Mong the meadows, on the hill  
Were flowers, but unto childhood  
The best were nearest still ;  
And I sometimes thought 'out yonder  
I will seek for blossoms too,'  
But turned again the fonder  
To those that round me grew ;

Soon told were childhood's treasures--  
The childish world was small,  
But its wonders and its pleasures  
Were its own—it held them *all* !

This was the home of childhood ;  
As in a Fairy Ring  
Within the circle of its hearth  
Was drawn each cherished thing ;  
I sent no restless thought beyond,  
I looked not to the door,  
If the whole world had entered there  
It could not give me more  
Than those that sat around it—all  
I knew of good and wise  
Spoke for me then upon their lips,  
And lived within their eyes ;  
I had no Future then, no Past,  
My life was unto me  
But one bright *Now*—the happiness  
That has no History !

Soon filled was childhood's measure,  
The childish heart was small,  
Yet they that made its treasure  
Were its own—it held them *all* !

## MATTHEW ARNOLD

CXCVI

*ISEULT'S CHILDREN*

Under the glittering hollies Iseult stands,  
Watching her children play ; their little hands  
Are busy gathering spars of quartz, and streams  
Of stagshorn for their hats ; anon, with screams  
Of mad delight they drop their spoils, and bound  
Among the holly-clumps and broken ground,  
Racing full speed, and startling in their rush  
The fell-fares and the speckled missel-thrush  
Out of their glossy coverts ;—but when now  
Their cheeks were flush'd, and over each hot  
brow,

Under the feather'd hats of the sweet pair,  
In blinding masses shower'd the golden hair—  
Then Iseult call'd them to her, and the three  
Cluster'd under the holly-screen, and she  
Told them an old-world Breton history.

Warm in their mantles wrapt, the three stood  
there,

Under the hollies, in the clear still air—  
Mantles with those rich furs deep glistering  
Which Venice ships do from swart Egypt bring.  
Long they stay'd still—then, pacing at their ease,  
Moved up and down under the glossy trees.

But still, as they pursued their warm dry road,  
From Iseult's lips the unbroken story flow'd,  
And still the children listen'd, their blue eyes  
Fix'd on their mother's face in wide surprise ;  
Nor did their looks stray once to the sea-side,  
Nor to the brown heaths round them, bright and  
wide,

Nor to the snow, which, though 'twas all away  
From the open heath, still by the hedgerows lay,  
Nor to the shining sea-fowl, that with screams  
Bore up from where the bright Atlantic gleams,

Swooping to landward ; nor to where, quite clear,  
The fell-fares settled on the thickets near.  
And they would still have listen'd, till dark night  
Came keen and chill down on the heather bright ;  
But, when the red glow on the sea grew cold,  
And the grey turrets of the castle old  
Look'd sternly through the frosty evening-air,  
Then Iseult took by the hand those children fair,  
And brought her tale to an end, and found the  
path,  
And led them home over the darkening heath. . . .

Sweet flower ! thy children's eyes  
Are not more innocent than thine.

But they sleep in shelter'd rest,  
Like helpless birds in the warm nest,  
On the castle's southern side ;  
Where feebly comes the mournful roar  
Of buffeting wind and surging tide  
Through many a room and corridor.

—Full on their window the moon's ray  
Makes their chamber as bright as day.  
It shines upon the blank white walls,  
And on the snowy pillow falls,  
And on two angel-heads doth play  
Turn'd to each other—the eyes closed,  
The lashes on the cheeks reposed.  
Round each sweet brow the cap close-set  
Hardly lets peep the golden hair ;  
Through the soft-open'd lips the air  
Scarcely moves the coverlet.

One little wandering arm is thrown  
At random on the counterpane,  
And often the fingers close in haste  
As if their baby-owner chased  
The butterflies again.

This stir they have and this alone ;  
But else they are so still !

—Ah, tired madcaps ! you lie still ;  
But were you at the window now,  
To look forth on the fairy sight

Of your illumined haunts by night,  
To see the park-glades where you play  
Far lovelier than they are by day,  
To see the sparkle on the eaves,  
And upon every giant-bough  
Of those old oaks, whose wet red leaves  
Are jewell'd with bright drops of rain—  
How would your voices run again !  
And far beyond the sparkling trees  
Of the castle-park one sees  
The bare heaths spreading, clear as day,  
Moor behind moor, far, far away,  
Into the heart of Brittany.  
And here and there, lock'd by the land,  
Long inlets of smooth glittering sea,  
And many a stretch of watery sand  
All shining in the white moon-beams—  
But you see fairer in your dreams ! . . .

Yes, it is lonely for her in her hall.  
The children, and the grey-hair'd seneschal,  
Her women, and Sir Tristram's agèd hound,  
Are there the sole companions to be found.  
But these she loves ; and noisier life than this  
She would find ill to bear, weak as she is.  
She has her children, too, and night and day  
Is with them ; and the wide heaths where they  
play,  
The hollies, and the cliff, and the sea-shore,  
The sand, the sea-birds, and the distant sails,  
These are to her dear as to them ; the tales  
With which this day the children she beguiled  
She gleaned from Breton grandames, when a  
child,  
In every hut along this sea-coast wild ;  
She herself loves them still, and, when they are  
told,  
Can forget all to hear them, as of old. . . .

## CXCVII

*THE FORSAKEN MERMAN*

Come, dear children, let us away ;  
 Down and away below !  
 Now my brothers call from the bay,  
 Now the great winds shoreward blow,  
 Now the salt tides seaward flow ;  
 Now the wild white horses play,  
 Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.  
 Children dear, let us away !  
 This way, this way !

Call her once before you go—  
 Call once yet !  
 In a voice that she will know :  
 ‘ Margaret ! Margaret ! ’  
 Children’s voices should be dear  
 (Call once more) to a mother’s ear ;  
 Children’s voices, wild with pain—  
 Surely she will come again !  
 Call her once and come away ;  
 This way, this way !  
 ‘ Mother dear, we cannot stay !  
 The wild white horses foam and fret.’  
 Margaret ! Margaret !

Come, dear children, come away down ;  
 Call no more !  
 One last look at the white-wall’d town,  
 And the little grey church on the windy shore ;  
 Then come down !  
 She will not come though you call all day ;  
 Come away, come away !

Children dear, was it yesterday  
 We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?  
 In the caverns where we lay,  
 Through the surf and through the swell,

The far-off sound of a silver bell ?  
 Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,  
 Where the winds are all asleep ;  
 Where the spent lights quiver and gleam,  
 Where the salt weed sways in the stream,  
 Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,  
 Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground ;  
 Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,  
 Dry their mail, and bask in the brine ;  
 Where great whales come sailing by,  
 Sail and sail, with unshut eye,  
 Round the world for ever and aye ?  
 When did music come this way ?  
 Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday  
 (Call yet once) that she went away ?  
 Once she sate with you and me,  
 On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,  
 And the youngest sate on her knee.  
 She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well,  
 When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.  
 She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green  
     sea ;  
 She said, ' I must go, for my kinsfolk pray  
 In the little grey church on the shore to-day.  
 'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me !  
 And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with  
     thee.'  
 I said, ' Go up, dear heart, through the waves.  
 Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-  
     caves !'  
 She smiled, she went up through the surf in the  
     bay.  
 Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, were we long alone ?  
 ' The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan ;  
 Long prayers,' I said, ' in the world they say ;  
 Come ! ' I said, and we rose through the surf in  
     the bay.  
 We went up the beach, by the sandy down

Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-wall'd town ;  
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,  
To the little grey church on the windy hill.  
From the church came a murmur of folk at their prayers,  
But we stood without in the cold-blowing airs.  
We climb'd on the graves, on the stones worn with rains,  
And we gazed up the aisle through the small leaded panes.  
She sate by the pillar ; we saw her clear :  
' Margaret, hist ! come quick, we are here.  
Dear heart,' I said, ' we are long alone.  
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.'  
But, ah, she gave me never a look,  
For her eyes were seal'd to the holy book !  
Loud prays the priest ; shut stands the door.  
Come away, children, call no more !  
Come away, come down, call no more !

Down, down, down !  
Down to the depths of the sea !  
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,  
Singing most joyfully.  
Hark what she sings : ' O joy, O joy,  
For the humming street, and the child with its toy !  
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well ;  
For the wheel where I spun,  
And the blessed light of the sun ! '  
And so she sings her fill,  
Singing most joyfully,  
Till the shuttle falls from her hand,  
And the whizzing wheel stands still.  
She steals to the window, and looks at the sand,  
And over the sand at the sea ;  
And her eyes are set in a stare ;  
And anon there breaks a sigh,  
And anon there drops a tear,  
From a sorrow-clouded eye,

And a heart sorrow-laden,  
 A long, long sigh  
 For the cold strange eyes of a little Mermaiden  
 And the gleam of her golden hair.

Come away, away, children !  
 Come children, come down !  
 The hoarse wind blows coldly ;  
 Lights shine in the town.  
 She will start from her slumber  
 When gusts shake the door ;  
 She will hear the winds howling,  
 Will hear the waves roar.

We shall see, while above us  
 The waves roar and whirl,  
 A ceiling of amber,  
 A pavement of pearl.  
 Singing, ‘ Here came a mortal,  
 But faithless was she !  
 And alone dwell for ever  
 The kings of the sea.’

But, children, at midnight,  
 When soft the winds blow,  
 When clear falls the moonlight,  
 When spring-tides are low ;  
 When sweet airs come seaward  
 From heaths starr’d with broom,  
 And high rocks throw mildly  
 On the blanch’d sands a gloom ;  
 Up the still, glistening beaches,  
 Up the creeks we will hie,  
 Over banks of bright seaweed  
 The ebb-tide leaves dry.  
 We will gaze, from the sand-hills,  
 At the white, sleeping town ;  
 At the church on the hill-side—  
 And then come back down.  
 Singing, ‘ There dwells a loved one,  
 But cruel is she !  
 She left lonely for ever  
 The kings of the sea.’

CECIL FRANCES ALEXANDER

## CXCVIII

*THE CHILD JESUS*

Once in royal David's city  
    Stood a lowly cattle shed,  
Where a Mother laid her Baby  
    In a manger for His bed ;  
Mary was that Mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little Child.

He came down to earth from Heaven  
    Who is God and Lord of all,  
And His shelter was a stable,  
    And His cradle was a stall ;  
With the poor, and mean, and lowly,  
Lived on earth our Saviour Holy.

And through all His wondrous Childhood  
    He would honour and obey,  
Love, and watch the lowly Maiden,  
    In whose gentle arms He lay ;  
Christian children all must be  
Mild, obedient, good as He.

For He is our childhood's pattern,  
    Day by day like us He grew,  
He was little, weak, and helpless,  
    Tears and smiles like us He knew ;  
And He feeleth for our sadness,  
And He shareth in our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him,  
    Through His own redeeming love,  
For that Child so dear and gentle  
    Is our Lord in Heav'n above ;  
And He leads His children on  
To the place where He is gone.

Not in that poor lowly stable,  
    With the oxen standing by,

We shall see Him ; but in Heav'n  
 Set at God's right hand on high ;  
 When like stars His children crown'd  
 All in white shall wait around.

## WILLIAM BRIGHTY RANDS

CXCIX

## THE FLOWERS

When Love arose in heart and deed  
 To wake the world to greater joy,  
 ' What can she give me now ? ' said Greed,  
 Who thought to win some costly toy.

He rose, he ran, he stoop'd, he clutch'd ;  
 And soon the Flowers, that Love let fall,  
 In Greed's hot grasp were fray'd and smutch'd,  
 And Greed said, ' Flowers ! Can this be all ? '

He flung them down and went his way,  
 He cared no jot for thyme or rose ;  
 But boys and girls came out to play,  
 And some took these and some took those—

Red, blue, and white, and green and gold .  
 And at their touch the dew return'd,  
 And all the bloom a thousandfold—  
 So red, so ripe, the roses burn'd !

CC

## PRAISE AND LOVE

Tell me, Praise, and tell me, Love,  
 What you both are thinking of ?  
 ' O, we think,' said Love, said Praise,  
 ' Now of children and their ways.'  
 Give me of your cup to drink,  
 Praise, and tell me what you think.

' O, I think of crowns of gold  
For the clever and the bold.'

Then I turn'd to Love, and said—  
Love was glowing heavenly-red—

Give me of your cup to drink,  
Love, and tell me what you think :

Let me taste your bitter-sweet ;  
Who are those that kiss your feet ?

Love look'd up—I read her eyes,  
They were stars and they were skies.

Clinging to her garment's hem,  
Smiling as I look'd at them,

There were children scarr'd and halt,  
Children weeping for a fault ;

Those who scarcely dared to raise  
Doubtful eyes to smiling Praise.

Love look'd round, and Praise and Pride  
Brought their glad ones to her side.

' Yea, these too ! ' she said, or sang ;  
And the world with music rang.

### WILLIAM (JOHNSON) CORY

ccI

#### *IN AFTER YEARS*

Oh, earlier shall the rosebuds blow,  
In after years, those happier years,  
And children weep, when we lie low,  
Far fewer tears, far softer tears.

Oh, true shall boyish laughter ring,  
Like tinkling chimes, in kinder times !  
And merrier shall the maiden sing :  
And I not there, and I not there.

Like lightning in the summer night.

Their mirth shall be, so quick and free ;  
And oh ! the flash of their delight  
I shall not see, I may not see.

In deeper dream, with wider range,

Those eyes shall shine, but not on mine ;  
Unmoved, unblest, by worldly change,  
The dead must rest, the dead shall rest.

## COVENTRY PATMORE

CCII

*REGINA COELI*

Say, did his sisters wonder what could Joseph see  
In a mild, silent little Maid like thee ?  
And was it awful, in that narrow house,  
With God for Babe and Spouse ?  
Nay, like thy simple, female sort, each one  
Apt to find Him in Husband and in Son,  
Nothing to thee came strange in this  
Thy wonder was but wondrous bliss :  
Wondrous, for, though  
True Virgin lives not but does know,  
(Howbeit none ever yet confess'd,)  
That God lies really in her breast,  
Of thine He made His special nest !  
And so  
All mothers worship little feet,  
And kiss the very ground they've trod ;  
But, ah, thy little Baby sweet  
Who was indeed thy God !

CCIII

*THE TOYS*

My little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes  
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,

Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,  
I struck him, and dismiss'd  
With hard words and unkiss'd ;  
—His Mother, who was patient, being dead.  
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,  
I visited his bed,  
But found him slumbering deep,  
With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet  
From his late sobbing wet.  
And I, with moan,  
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own ;  
For, on a table drawn beside his head,  
He had put, within his reach,  
A box of counters and a red-vein'd stone,  
A piece of glass abraded by the beach,  
And six or seven shells,  
A bottle with bluebells,  
And two French copper coins, ranged there with  
careful art,  
To comfort his sad heart.

So when that night I pray'd  
To God, I wept, and said :  
Ah ! when at last we lie with trancèd breath,  
Not vexing Thee in death,  
And Thou rememberest of what toys  
We made our joys,  
How weakly understood  
Thy great commanded good,—  
Then, fatherly not less  
Than I whom Thou hast moulded from the clay,  
Thou'l leave Thy wrath, and say,  
' I will be sorry for their childishness.'

## 'IF I WERE DEAD'

' If I were dead, you'd sometimes say, Poor  
Child ! '  
The dear lips quiver'd as they spake,

And the tears brake  
 From eyes which, not to grieve me, brightly  
 smiled.  
 Poor Child, poor Child !  
 I seem to hear your laugh, your talk, your  
 song. .  
 It is not true that Love will do no wrong.  
 Poor Child !  
 And did you think, when you so cried and smiled,  
 How I, in lonely nights, should lie awake,  
 And of those words your full avengers make ?  
 Poor Child, poor Child !  
 And now, unless it be  
 That sweet amends thrice told are come to thee,  
 O God, have Thou *no* mercy upon me !  
 Poor Child !

## WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

ccv

## HALF-WAKING

I thought it was the little bed  
 I slept in long ago ;  
 A straight white curtain at the head,  
 And two smooth knobs below.

I thought I saw the nursery fire,  
 And in a chair well-known  
 My mother sat, and did not tire  
 With reading all alone.

If I should make the slightest sound  
 To show that I'm awake,  
 She'd rise, and lap the blankets round,  
 My pillow softly shake ;

Kiss me, and turn my face to see  
 The shadows on the wall,  
 And then sing Rousseau's *Dream* to me,  
 Till fast asleep I fall.

But this is not my little bed,  
 That time is far away ;  
 'Mong strangers cold I live instead,  
 From dreary day to day.

## CCVI

*A MEMORY*

Four ducks on a pond,  
 A grass-bank beyond,  
 A blue sky of spring,  
 White clouds on the wing :  
 What a little thing  
 To remember for years—  
 To remember with tears !

## GEORGE MACDONALD

## CCVII

*BABY*

Where did you come from, Baby dear ?  
 Out of the everywhere into here.

Where did you get those eyes so blue ?  
 Out of the sky as I came through.

What makes the light in them sparkle and spin ?  
 Some of the starry spikes left in.

Where did you get that little tear ?  
 I found it waiting when I got here.

What makes your forehead so smooth and high ?  
 A soft hand stroked it as I went by.

What makes your cheek like a warm white rose ?  
 I saw something better than anyone knows.

Whence that three-cornered smile of bliss ?  
 Three angels gave me at once a kiss.

Where did you get this pearly ear ?  
God spoke, and it came out to hear.

Where did you get those arms and hands ?  
Love made itself into bonds and bands.

Feet, whence did you come, you darling things ?  
From the same box as the cherub's wings.

How did they all just come to be you ?  
God thought about me, and so I grew.

But how did you come to us, you dear ?  
God thought about you, and so I am here.

## SYDNEY DOBELL

CCVIII

*THE LITTLE GIRL'S SONG*

Do not mind my crying, Papa, I am not crying  
for pain.

Do not mind my shaking, Papa, I am not shak-  
ing with fear ;

Tho' the wild wild wind is hideous to hear,  
And I see the snow and the rain.

When will you come back again,  
Papa, Papa ?

Somebody else that you love, Papa,  
Somebody else that you dearly love  
Is weary, like me, because you're away.  
Sometimes I see her lips tremble and move,  
And I seem to know what they're going to say ;  
And every day, and all the long day,  
I long to cry, ' Oh Mamma, Mamma,  
When will Papa come back again ? '  
But before I can say it I see the pain  
Creeping up on her white white cheek,  
As the sweet sad sunshine creeps up the white  
wall

And then I am sorry, and fear to speak ;  
And slowly the pain goes out of her cheek,  
As the sad sweet sunshine goes from the wall.  
Oh, I wish I were grown up wise and tall,  
That I might throw my arms round her neck  
And say, ' Dear Mamma, oh, what is it all  
That I see and see and do not see  
In your white white face all the livelong day ? '  
But she hides her grief from a child like me.  
When will you come back again,  
Papa, Papa ?

Where were you going, Papa, Papa ?  
All this long while have you been on the sea ?  
When she looks as if she saw far away,  
Is she thinking of you, and what does she see ?  
Are the white sails blowing,  
Are the blue men rowing,  
And are you standing on the high deck  
Where we saw you stand till the ship grew grey,  
And we watched and watched till the ship was a  
speck,  
And the dark came first to you, far away ?  
I wish I could see what she can see,  
But she hides her grief from a child like me.  
When will you come back again,  
Papa, Papa ?

Don't you remember, Papa, Papa ?  
How we used to sit by the fire, all three,  
And she told me tales while I sat on her knee,  
And heard the winter winds roar down the street,  
And knock like men at the window pane,  
And the louder they roared, oh, it seemed more  
sweet  
To be warm and warm as we used to be,  
Sitting at night by the fire, all three ?  
When will you come back again,  
Papa, Papa ?

Papa, I like to sit by the fire ;  
Why does she sit far away in the cold ?

If I had but somebody wise and old,  
That every day I might cry and say,  
' Is she changed, do you think, or do I forget ?  
Was she always as white as she is to-day ?  
Did she never carry her head up higher ? '

Papa, Papa, if I could but know !  
Do you think her voice was always so low ?  
Did I always see what I seem to see  
When I wake up at night and her pillow is wet ?  
You used to say her hair it was gold—  
It looks like silver to me.  
But still she tells the same tale that she told,  
She sings the same songs when I sit on her knee,  
And the house goes on as it went long ago,  
When we lived together, all three.  
Sometimes my heart seems to sink, Papa,  
And I feel as if I could be happy no more.  
Is she changed, do you think, Papa,  
Or did I dream she was brighter before ?  
She makes me remember my snowdrop, Papa,  
That I forgot in thinking of you,  
The sweetest snowdrop that ever I knew !  
But I put it out of the sun and rain :  
It was green and white when I put it away,  
It had one sweet bell and green leaves four ;  
It was green and white when I found it that day,  
It had one pale bell and green leaves four,  
But I was not glad of it any more.  
Was it changed, do you think, Papa,  
Or did I dream it was brighter before ?

Do not mind my crying, Papa,  
I am not crying for pain.  
Do not mind my shaking, Papa,  
I am not shaking for fear ;  
Tho' the wild wild wind is hideous to hear,  
And I see the snow and the rain.  
When will you come back again,  
Papa, Papa ?

FRANCIS TURNER PALGRAVE

CCIX

*ON THE LOVE OF CHILDREN*

To that green hill, the shepherds' haunt,  
Why speed the children's feet ?  
And who the Youth that sits alone,  
The clamorous flock to greet ?

His hands are laid above their heads,  
Their faces at His knee :  
His looks are looks of love ; yet seem  
Something beyond to see.

The simple townsmen cross the hill  
And bid the throng away,  
' Nor press around the stranger youth,  
Nor by the fold delay.'

As one who smiles and wakes, He lifts  
A child upon His knee :  
God's kingdom is of such as these ;  
So let them come to Me.'

—Ah, Lord and Christ ! Thy perfect heart  
No fond excess could touch !  
But man's best strength is feebleness,  
And we may love too much !

Yet maim'd the man, or poor in blood,  
Who glows not with delight  
Whene'er the little ones go by  
In casual daily sight ;

Or when the child at mother's knee,  
His altar, lisps a prayer,  
And perfect faith, and utter love,  
And Christ Himself, is there ;

Or when the little hands are clasp'd  
To beg some baby grace,  
And all the beauty of the dawn  
Comes rose-red o'er the face ;

Or when some elder one from sport  
 Her smaller sister wiles,  
 And two bright heads o'ershade the book ;  
 Half study, and half smiles.

—Ah, Lord and Christ ! Thy perfect heart  
 No fond excess could touch !  
 Yet when that innocence we see,  
 How can we love too much ?

They twine around our heart of hearts ;  
 Their spell we seek in vain ;—  
 Go, ask the linnet why he sings,—  
 He can but sing again !

To winter-life their bloom and breath  
 Renew a later spring,  
 O dewy roses of the dawn,  
 Fresh from God's gardening !

Earth's treasures waste with use ; but Thine,  
 O Lord ! by lessening grow :  
 From love's pure fount the more we take,  
 The more the waters flow.

How should we prize the things unseen,  
 Not prizing what we see ?  
 How turn away Thy little ones  
 Without forbidding Thee ?

The Shepherd wills not we should stint  
 Or count our kisses o'er ;  
 Nor bids us love His lambs the less,  
 But Him, Who loves them, more.

## CCX

*MARGARET ROPER'S VISION OF HER  
 FATHER, SIR THOMAS MORE*

The vision of her girlhood glinted by :—  
 And how the father through their garden stray'd  
 And, child with children, play'd  
 And teased the rabbit-hutch, and fed the dove

Before him from above  
 Alighting, in his visitation sweet,  
 Led on by little hands, and eager feet.

Hence among those he stands,  
 Elect ones, ever in whose ears the word  
*He that offends these little ones . . .* is heard ;  
 With love and kisses smiling-out commands,  
 And all the tender hearts within his hands ;  
 Seeing, in every child that goes, a flower  
 From Eden's nursery bower,  
 A little stray from Heaven, for reverence here  
 Sent down, and comfort dear :  
 All care well paid for by one pure caress,  
 And life made happy in their happiness.

ADELAIDE ANNE PROCTER

CCXI

*LINKS WITH HEAVEN*

Our God in Heaven, from that holy place,  
 To each of us an angel guide has given ;  
 But mothers of dead children have more grace,  
 For they give angels to their God in Heaven.

How can a mother's heart feel cold or weary,  
 Knowing her dearer self safe, happy, warm ?  
 How can she feel her road too dark or dreary  
 Who knows her treasure sheltered from the  
 storm ?—

How can she sin ? *Our* hearts may be un-  
 heeding—

Our God forgot, our holy Saints defied—  
 But can a mother hear her dead child pleading,  
 And thrust those little angel-hands aside ?—

Those little hands stretched down to draw her  
 ever  
 Nearer to God by mother-love.—We all

Are blind and weak—yet surely *she* can never,  
With such a stake in Heaven, fail or fall.

She knows that, when the mighty angels raise  
Chorus in Heaven, one little silver tone  
Is hers for ever—that one little praise,  
One little, happy voice, is all her own.

We may not see her sacred crown of honour ;  
But all the angels, flitting to and fro,  
Pause smiling as they pass—they look upon her  
As mother of an angel whom they know ;  
One whom they nestling left at Mary's feet—  
The children's place in Heaven—who softly  
sings

A little chant to please them, slow and sweet,  
Or smiling, strokes their little folded wings :

Or gives them her white lilies or her beads  
To play with : yet, in spite of flower or song,  
They often lift a wistful look, that pleads  
And asks her why their mother stays so long.

Then our dear Queen makes answer, she will call  
Her very soon : meanwhile they are beguiled  
To wait, and listen while she tells them all  
The story of her Jesus as a child.

Ah ! saints in Heaven may pray with earnest will  
And pity for their weak and erring brothers :  
Yet there is prayer in Heaven more tender still—  
The little children pleading for their mothers.

### RICHARD WILTON

CCXII

#### *MY GRANDCHILDREN AT CHURCH*

Bright Dorothy, with eyes of blue,  
And serious Dickie, brave as fair,  
Crossing to Church you oft may view  
When no one but myself is there :

First to the belfry they repair,  
 And, while to the long ropes they cling,  
   And make believe to call to prayer,  
 For angels' ears the bells they ring.

Next, seated gravely in a pew  
   A pulpit homily they share,  
 Meet for my little flock of two,  
   Pointed and plain, as they can bear ;  
   Then venture up the pulpit stair,  
 Pray at the desk or gaily sing :  
   O sweet child-life, without a care—  
 For angels' ears the bells they ring.

Dear little ones, the early dew  
   Of holy infancy they wear,  
 And lift to Heaven a face as true  
   As flowers that breathe the morning air ;  
   Whate'er they do, where'er they fare,  
 They can command an angel's wing :  
   Their voices have a music rare,—  
 For angels' ears the bells they ring.

O parents, of your charge beware ;  
   Their angels stand before the King :  
 In work, play, sleep, and everywhere  
   For angels' ears the bells they ring.

THOMAS EDWARD BROWN

CCXIII

*BETWEEN OUR FOLDING LIPS*

Between our folding lips  
 God slips  
 An embryon life, and goes ;  
 And this becomes your rose.  
 We love, God makes : in our sweet mirth  
 God spies occasion for a birth.  
*Then is it His, or is it ours ?*  
 I know not—He is fond of flowers.

## CCXIV

*THE PRAYERS*

I was in Heaven one day when all the prayers  
 Came in, and angels bore them up the stairs  
 Unto a place where he,  
 Who was ordained such ministry,  
 Should sort them, so that in that palace bright  
 The presence-chamber might be duly dight ;  
 For they were like to flowers of various bloom ;  
 And a divinest fragrance filled the room.

Then did I see how the great sorter chose  
 One flower that seemed to me a hedge<sup>†</sup> rose,  
 And from the tangled press  
 Of that irregular loveliness  
 Set it apart—and—‘ This,’ I heard him say,  
 ‘ Is for the Master ’ : so upon his way  
 He would have passed ; then I to him :—  
 ‘ Whence is this rose ? O thou of cherubim  
 The chiefest ? ’—‘ Know’st thou not ? ’ he said  
 and smiled,  
 ‘ This is the first prayer of a little child.’

## CCXV

*MAY MARGERY OF LYNTON*

May Margery of Lynton  
 Is brighter than the day ;  
 Her eye is like the sun in heaven—  
 Was ne’er so sweet a May !

May Margery has learnt a tune  
 To which her soul is set—  
 The voices of all happy things  
 Are in its cadence met—  
 The voices of all happy things  
 In air, and earth, and sea,

Make music in the little breast  
Of sweet May Margery.

And has May Margery a heart ?  
Nay, child, God give thee grace !  
He made it for thee years ago,  
And keeps it in a place—  
The heart of gold that shall be thine,—  
But who shall have the key  
That opens it—Ah, who ? ah, who ?  
Ah, who, May Margery ?

## CCXVI

*THE INTERCEPTED SALUTE*

A little maiden met me in the lane,  
And smiled a smile so very fain,  
So full of trust and happiness,  
I could not choose but bless  
The child, that she should have such grace  
To laugh into my face.

She never could have known me : but I thought  
It was the common joy that wrought  
Within the little creature's heart,  
As who should say :—'Thou art  
As I ; the heaven is bright above us ;  
And there is God to love us.  
And I am but a little gleeful maid,  
And thou art big, and old, and staid ;  
But the blue hills have made thee mild  
As is a little child.  
Wherefore I laugh that thou may'st see—  
O, laugh ! O, laugh with me !'

A pretty challenge ! Then I turned me round,  
And straight the sober truth I found.  
For I was not alone ; behind me stood,  
Beneath his load of wood,  
He that of right the smile possessed—  
Her father manifest.

O, blest be God ! that such an overplus  
 Of joy is given to us !  
 That that sweet innocent  
 Gave me the gift she never meant,  
 A gift secure and permanent !  
 For, howsoe'er the smile had birth,  
 It is an added glory on the earth.

## CCXVII

*IN A FAIR GARDEN*

In a fair garden  
 I saw a mother playing with her child,  
 And, with that chance beguiled,  
 I could not choose but look  
 How she did seem to harden  
 His little soul to brook  
 Her absence—reconciled  
 With after boon of kisses,  
 And sweet irrational blisses.  
 For she would hide  
 With loveliest grace  
 Of seeming craft  
 Till he was ware of none beside  
 Himself upon the place ;—  
 And then he laughed,  
 And then he stood a space  
 Disturbed, his face  
 Prepared for tears ;  
 And half-acknowledged fears  
 Met would-be courage, balancing  
 His heart upon the spring  
 Of flight—till, waxing stout,  
 He gulped the doubt.  
 So up the pleachèd alley  
 Full swift he ran :  
 Whence she,  
 Not long delayed,  
 Rushed forth with joyous sally

Upon her little man.  
 Then was it good to see  
 How each to other made  
 A pretty rapture of discovery

Blest child ! blest mother ! blest the truth ye  
 taught—  
 God seeketh us, and yet He would be sought.

## CCXVIII

*O GOD, TO THEE I YIELD*

O God, to Thee I yield  
 The gift Thou giv'st most precious, most divine !  
 Yet to what field  
 I must resign  
 His little feet  
 That wont to be so fleet,  
 I muse. O, joy to think  
 On what soft brink  
 Of flood he plucks the daffodils,  
 On what empurpled hills  
 He stands, Thy kiss all fresh upon his brow,  
 And wonders, if his father sees him now !

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI

## CCXIX

*CONTENTMENT*

Dancing on the hill-tops,  
 Singing in the valleys,  
 Laughing with the echoes,  
 Merry little Alice.

Playing games with lambkins  
 In the flowering valleys,  
 Gathering pretty posies,  
 Helpful little Alice.

If her father's cottage  
     Turned into a palace,  
     And he owned the hill-tops  
         And the flowering valleys,  
     She'd be none the happier,  
         Happy little Alice.

## CCXX

*A CRADLE SONG*

Sleep, little Baby, sleep ;  
     The holy Angels love thee,  
     And guard thy bed, and keep  
         A blessed watch above thee.  
     No spirit can come near  
         Nor evil beast to harm thee :  
     Sleep, Sweet, devoid of fear  
         Where nothing need alarm thee.  
  
     The Love which doth not sleep,  
         The eternal Arms surround thee :  
     The Shepherd of the sheep  
         In perfect love hath found thee.  
     Sleep through the holy night,  
         Christ-kept from snare and sorrow,  
     Until thou wake to light  
         And love and warmth to-morrow.

## CCXXI

*BUDS AND BABIES*

A million buds are born that never blow,  
     That sweet with promise lift a pretty head  
     To blush and wither on a barren bed,  
         And leave no fruit to show.  
  
     Sweet, unfulfilled. Yet have I understood  
         One joy, by their fragility made plain :  
     Nothing was ever beautiful in vain,  
         Or all in vain was good.

## CCXXII

*HOLY INNOCENTS DAY*

They scarcely waked before they slept,  
 They scarcely wept before they laughed ;  
 They drank indeed death's bitter draught,  
 But all its bitterest dregs were kept  
 And drained by Mothers while they wept.

From Heaven the speechless Infants speak :  
 Weep not (they say), our Mothers dear,  
 For swords nor sorrows come not here.

Now we are strong who were so weak,  
 And all is ours we could not seek.

We bloom among the blooming flowers,  
 We sing among the singing birds ;  
 Wisdom we have who wanted words :  
 Here morning knows not evening hours,  
 All's rainbow here without the showers.

And softer than our Mother's breast,  
 And closer than our Mother's arm,  
 Is here the Love that keeps us warm  
 And broods above our happy nest.  
 Dear Mothers, come : for Heaven is best.

## 'LEWIS CARROLL'

## CCXXIII

*PROEM TO 'ALICE IN WONDERLAND'*

All in the golden afternoon  
 Full leisurely we glide ;  
 For both our oars, with little skill,  
 By little arms are plied,  
 While little hands make vain pretence  
 Our wanderings to guide.

Ah, cruel Three ! In such an hour,  
 Beneath such dreamy weather,

To beg a tale of breath too weak  
     To stir the tiniest feather !  
 Yet what can one poor voice avail  
     Against three tongues together ?

Imperious Prima flashes forth  
     Her edict ' to begin it '—  
 In gentler tone Secunda hopes  
     ' There will be nonsense in it ! '—  
 While Tertia interrupts the tale  
     Not *more* than once a minute.

Anon, to sudden silence won,  
     In fancy they pursue  
 The dream-child moving through a land  
     Of wonders wild and new,  
 In friendly chat with bird or beast—  
     And half believe it true.

And ever, as the story drained  
     The wells of fancy dry,  
 And faintly strove that weary one  
     To put the subject by,  
     ' The rest next time '—' It *is* next time ! '  
     The happy voices cry.

Thus grew the tale of Wonderland :  
     Thus slowly, one by one,  
 Its quaint events were hammered out—  
     And now the tale is done,  
 And home we steer, a merry crew,  
     Beneath the setting sun.

Alice ! a childish story take,  
     And with a gentle hand  
 Lay it where Childhood's dreams are twined  
     In Memory's mystic band,  
 Like pilgrim's wither'd wreath of flowers  
     Pluck'd in a far-off land.

## CCXXIV

*From PROEM TO ' ALICE THROUGH  
THE LOOKING GLASS '*

Child of the pure unclouded brow  
 And dreaming eyes of wonder !  
 Though time be fleet, and I and thou  
 Are half a life asunder,  
 Thy loving smile will surely hail  
 The love-gift of a fairy-tale.

I have not seen thy sunny face,  
 Nor heard thy silver laughter ;  
 No thought of me shall find a place  
 In thy young life's hereafter—  
 Enough that now thou wilt not fail  
 To listen to my fairy-tale.

FRANCIS ROBERT ST. CLAIR-ERSKINE,  
 EARL OF ROSSLYN

## CCXXV

*BED-TIME*

'Tis bed-time ; say your hymn, and bid 'Good-night,  
 God bless Mamma, Papa, and dear ones all,'  
 Your half-shut eyes beneath your eyelids fall,  
 Another minute you will shut them quite.  
 Yes, I will carry you, put out the light,  
 And tuck you up, although you are so tall !  
 What will you give me, Sleepy One, and call  
 My wages, if I settle you all right ?  
 I laid her golden curls upon my arm,  
 I drew her little feet within my hand,  
 Her rosy palms were joined in trustful bliss,  
 Her heart next mine beat gently, soft and warm ;  
 She nestled to me, and, by Love's command,  
 Paid me my precious wages—' Baby's kiss.'

## THE HON. RODEN NOEL

CCXXVI

*VALE !*

O-tender dove, sweet circling in the blue,  
Whom now a delicate cloud receives from view,  
O cool, soft, delicate cloud, we name dim Death !  
O pure white lamb-lily, inhaling breath  
From spiritual ether among bowers  
Of evergreen in the ever-living flowers  
Yonder aloft upon the airy height,  
Mine eyes may scarce arrive at thy still light !  
Wandering ever higher, O, farewell !  
Wilt thou the dear God tell  
We loved thee well,  
While He would lend thee ? Why may we not  
follow ?  
Do thou remember us in our dim hollow !  
Farewell, love ! O, farewell, farewell, farewell !  
We wave to thee, as when of old  
Thou waved, and we waved, heart of gold !  
Parting for a little while.  
And is all parting only for a while ?  
O faint perfume from realms beyond the sky !  
Waft of a low celestial melody !  
O pure live water from our earthly well,  
Whom Love changed to a heavenly oenomel,  
The while he kiss'd the bowl with longing lip,  
And drew the soul therein to fellowship !  
Shimmer of white wings, ere ye vanish !  
Glimmer of white robes, ere ye banish,  
With your full glory, mortal eyes  
From Paradise !  
So far, so far,  
Little star !  
Unless thine own dear happiness it mar,  
Remember us in our low dell,  
Who love thee well !  
Farewell !

## WILLIAM MORRIS

CCXXVII

## - THE VISION

Sirs, ye are old, and ye have seen perchance  
 Some little child for very gladness dance  
 Over a scarcely-noticed worthless thing,  
 Worth more to him than ransom of a king,  
 Did not a pang of more than pity take  
 Your heart thereat, not for the youngling's  
 sake,  
 But for your own, for man that passes by,  
 So like to God, so like the beasts that die ?—  
 Lo, Sirs, my pity for myself is such,  
 When like an image that my hand can touch  
 My old self grows unto myself grown old.

## SARAH MORGAN BRYAN PIATT

CCXXVIII

## LAST WORDS

(Over a little bed at night)

Good night, pretty sleepers of mine—  
 I never shall see you again :  
 Ah, never in shadow or shine ;  
 Ah, never in dew or in rain.  
 In your small dreaming-dresses of white,  
 With the wild-bloom you gathered to-day  
 In your quiet shut hands, from the light  
 And the dark you will wander away.

Though no graves in the bee-haunted grass,  
 And no love in the beautiful sky,  
 Shall take you as yet, you will pass,  
 With this kiss, through these tear-drops.  
 Good-bye !

With less gold and more gloom in their hair,  
 When the buds near have faded to flowers,  
 Three faces may wake here as fair—  
 But older than yours are, by hours !

Good night, then, lost darlings of mine—  
 I never shall see you again :  
 Ah, never in shadow or shine,  
 Ah, never in dew or in rain.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

CCXXXIX

*IN A GARDEN*

Baby, see the flowers !  
 —Baby sees  
 Fairer things than these,  
 Fairer though they be than dreams of ours.

Baby, hear the birds !  
 —Baby knows  
 Better songs than those,  
 Sweeter though they sound than sweetest words.

Baby, see the moon !  
 —Baby's eyes  
 Laugh to watch it rise,  
 Answering light with love and night with noon.

Baby, hear the sea !  
 —Baby's face  
 Takes a graver grace,  
 Touched with wonder what the sound may be.

Baby, see the star !  
 —Baby's hand  
 Opens, warm and bland,  
 Calm in claim of all things fair that are.

Baby, hear the bells !  
 —Baby's head  
 Bows, as ripe for bed,  
 Now the flowers curl round and close their cells.  
 Baby, flower of light,  
 Sleep, and see  
 Brighter dreams than we,  
 Till good day shall smile away good night.

## ccxxx

*From 'A BABY'S DEATH'*

The little hands that never sought  
 Earth's prizes, worthless all as sands,  
 What gift has death, God's servant, brought  
 The little hands ?

We ask : but love's self silent stands,  
 Love, that lends eyes and wings to thought  
 To search where death's dim heaven expands.  
 Ere this, perchance, though love know nought,  
 Flowers fill them, grown in lovelier lands,  
 Where hands of guiding angels caught  
 The little hands.

## ccxxxI

*FIRST FOOTSTEPS*

A little way, more soft and sweet  
 Than fields aflower with May,  
 A babe's feet, venturing, scarce complete  
 A little way.

Eyes full of dawning day  
 Look up for mother's eyes to meet,  
 Too blithe for song to say.

Glad as the golden spring to greet  
 Its first live leaflet's play,  
 Love, laughing, leads the little feet  
 A little way.

CCXXXII

*WHAT IS DEATH?*

Looking on a page where stood  
 Graven of old on old-world wood  
 Death, and by the grave's edge grim,  
 Pale, the young man facing him,  
 Asked my well-beloved of me  
 Once what strange thing this might be,  
 Gaunt and great of limb.

Death, I told him : and surprise  
 Deepening more his wildwood eyes  
 (Like some sweet fleet thing's whose breath  
 Speaks all spring though nought it saith),  
 Up he turned his rosebright face  
 Glorious with its seven years' grace,  
 Asking—What is Death ?

WILLIAM THRELKELD EDWARDS

CCXXXIII

*UPWARD GAZING*

Whither gazest, O my child?  
 What beholdest in the sky?  
 Dost thou feel thyself exiled  
 From on high?

Doth the Father give to thee  
 Clearer vision than is mine?  
 Is it given thee to see  
 Heaven shine?

Dost thou see the face of Christ  
 With thy new baptizèd eyes?  
 Angels bright emparadised  
 In the skies ?

O my child, that thou couldst speak !  
 Or thine eyes reflect the sight !

Thou must, since my faith is weak,  
Teach me right.

Shall I teach thee more than thou  
Canst reveal from God to me ?  
For the sight of heaven seems now  
Given thee.

Sweet, it seems thy deep blue eyes  
Take new azure from the sky ;  
Truly near to heaven lies  
Infancy.

## BRET HARTE

CCXXXIV

*LITTLE NELL*

Above the pines the moon was slowly drifting,  
The river sang below ;  
The dim Sierras, from beyond, uplifting  
Their minarets of snow.

The roaring camp-fire, with rude humour, painted  
The ruddy tints of health  
On haggard face and form that drooped and  
fainted  
In the fierce race for wealth ;

Till one arose, and from his pack's scant treasure  
A hoarded volume drew,  
And cards were dropped from hands of listless  
leisure  
To hear the tale anew ;

And then, while round them shadows gathered  
faster,  
And as the fire-light fell,  
He read aloud the book wherein the Master  
Had writ of ' Little Nell.'

Perhaps 'twas boyish fancy—for the reader  
Was youngest of them all—

But, as he read, from clustering pine and cedar  
     A silence seemed to fall ;  
 The fir-trees, gathering closer in the shadows,  
     Listened in every spray,  
 While the whole camp, with ' Nell ' on English  
     meadows,  
     Wandered and lost their way.  
 And so in mountain solitudes—o'er taken  
     As by some spell divine—  
 Their cares dropped from them like the needles  
     shaken  
     From out the gusty pine.  
 Lost is that camp, and wasted all its fire ;  
     And he who wrought that spell ?—  
 Ah, towering pine and stately Kentish spire,  
     Ye have one tale to tell !  
 Lost is that camp ! but let its fragrant story  
     Blend with the breath that thrills  
 With hop-vines' incense all the pensive glory  
     That fills the Kentish hills.  
 And on that grave where English oak and holly  
     And laurel wreaths entwine,  
 Deem it not all a too presumptuous folly,—  
     This spray of Western pine !

## AUSTIN DOBSON

CCXXXV

## BEFORE SEDAN

*The dead hand clasped a letter.'* *Special Correspondence.*

Here in this leafy place  
     Quiet he lies,  
 Cold, with his sightless face  
     Turned to the skies.

'Tis but another dead ;  
All you can say is said.

Carry his body hence—  
Kings must have slaves ;  
Kings climb to eminence  
Over men's graves :  
So this man's eye is dim ;—  
Throw the earth over him.

What was the white you touched,  
There, at his side ?  
Paper his hand had clutched  
Tight ere he died ;—  
Message or wish, maybe ;—  
Smooth the folds out, and see.

Hardly the worst of us  
Here could have smiled !—  
Only the tremulous  
Words of a child ;—  
Prattle, that has for stops  
Just a few ruddy drops.

Look. She is sad to miss,  
Morning and night,  
His—her dead father's—kiss ;  
Tries to be bright,  
Good to Mamma, and sweet.  
That is all. ' Marguerite.'

Ah, if beside the dead  
Slumbered the pain !  
Ah, if the hearts that bled  
Slept with the slain !  
If the grief died ;—But no ;—  
Death will not have it so.

THOMAS HARDY

CCXXXVI

*THE ROMAN ROAD*

The Roman Road runs straight and bare  
 As the pale parting-line in hair  
 Across the heath. And thoughtful men  
 Contrast its days of Now and Then,  
 And delve, and measure, and compare ;

Visioning on the vacant air  
 Helmed legionaries, who proudly rear  
 The Eagle, as they pace again  
The Roman Road.

But no tall brass-helmed legionnaire  
 Haunts it for me. Uprises there  
 A mother's form upon my ken,  
 Guiding my infant steps, as when  
 We walked that ancient thoroughfare  
The Roman Road.

CCXXXVII

*CHRISTMAS EVE*

Christmas Eve, and twelve of the clock.  
 'Now they are all on their knees,'  
 An elder said as we sat in a flock  
 By the embers in hearthside ease.

We pictured the meek mild creatures where  
 They dwelt in their strawy pen,  
 Nor did it occur to one of us there  
 To doubt they were kneeling then.

So fair a fancy few would weave  
 In these years ! Yet, I feel,  
 If some one said on Christmas Eve,  
 'Come ; see the oxen kneel

' In the lonely barton by yonder coomb  
Our childhood used to know,'  
I should go with him in the gloom,  
Hoping it might be so.

## HARRIET ELEANOR HAMILTON-KING

CCXXXVIII

*WHERE ARE THE CHILDREN ?*

Father and mother, many a year  
In rain and sunshine we have lived here,  
And the children—

And now that the winter days are come,  
We wait and rest in our own old home ;  
But where are the children ?

All so young, in the times of old  
Not a lamb was missing from our fold,  
And the children—

God's ways are narrow, the world is wide,  
I would have guarded them at my side ;  
But where are the children ?

We walk to the house of God alone,  
From the last year's nest the birds have flown,  
And the children—

Alone by the silent hearth we sit,  
The chambers are ready, the fires are lit ;  
But where are the children ?

My life is failing, my hair is grey,  
I have seen the old years pass away,  
And the children—

My steps are feeble, my voice is low,  
I am longing to bless you ere I go :  
But where are the children ?

I had a dream of another home ;  
I thought when He called us I should come,  
And the children—

And say, at the feet of Our Father in Heaven,  
Here am I, with those Thou hast given :—  
    But where are the children ?

The Day of the Lord is coming on ;  
We shall meet again before God's throne,  
    And the children—  
Father and Mother, we trust, shall stand  
Together then at God's right hand :—  
    But where are the children ?

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS

CCXXXIX

*THE CHORISTER*

Snow on the high-pitched minster roof and spire :  
Snow on the boughs of leafless linden trees :  
Snow on the silent streets and squares that freeze  
Under night's wing, down-drooping nigh and nigher.  
Inside the church, within the shadowy choir,  
Dim burn the lamps like lights on vaporous seas ;  
Drowsed are the voices of droned litanies ;  
Blurred as in dreams the face of priest and friar.  
Cold hath numbed sense to slumber here ! But hark,  
One swift soprano, soaring like a lark,  
Startles the stillness ; throbs that soul of fire,  
Beats around arch and aisle, floods echoing dark  
With exquisite aspiration ; higher, higher,  
Yearns in sharp anguish of untold desire !

CCXL

*FOR ONE OF GIAN BELLINI'S LITTLE ANGELS*

My task it is to stand beneath the throne,  
 To stand and wait, while those grave pres-  
 ences,

Prophet and priest and saint and seraph, zone  
 Our Lady with the Child upon her knees :  
 They from mild lips receive the messages  
 Of peace and love, which thence to men below  
 They shower soft-falling like pure flakes of snow.

I meanwhile wait ; and very mute must be  
 My music, lest I break the golden trance  
 Of bliss celestial, or with childish glee  
 Trouble the fount of divine utterance.  
 Yet when those lips are tired of speech, per-  
 chance .

It may be that the royal Babe will lie  
 And slumber to my whispered lullaby :

Then all those mighty brows will rest, and peace  
 Descend like dew on that high company.  
 Therefore I stand and wait, but do not cease  
 To clasp my lute, that silver melody,  
 When our dear Lady bends her smile on me,  
 Forth from my throat and from these thrilling  
 strings  
 Dove-like may soar and spread ethereal wings.

ROBERT BUCHANAN

CCXLI

*THE PILGRIM AND THE HERDBOY**Pilgrim*

Little Herdboy, sitting there,  
 With the sunshine on thy hair,

And thy flocks so white and still  
 Spilt around thee on the hill,  
 Tell me true, in thy sweet speech,  
 Of the City I would reach.

'Tis a City of God's Light  
 Most imperishably bright,  
 And its gates are golden all,—  
 And at dawn and evenfall  
 They grow ruby-bright and blest  
 To the east and to the west.

Here, among the hills, it lies,  
 Like a lamb with lustrous eyes  
 Lying at the Shepherd's feet ;  
 And the breath of it is sweet,  
 As it rises from the sward  
 To the nostrils of the Lord !

Little Herdboy, tell me right,  
 Hast thou seen it from thy height ?  
 For it lieth up this way,  
 And at dawn or death of day  
 Thou hast surely seen it shine  
 With the light that is divine.

*The little Herdboy*

Where the buttercups so sweet  
 Dust with gold my naked feet,  
 Where the grass grows green and long,  
 Sit I here and sing my song,  
 And the brown bird cries ' Cuckoo '  
 Under skies for ever blue !

Now and then, while I sing loud,  
 Flits a little fleecy cloud,  
 And uplooking I behold  
 How it turns to rain of gold,  
 Falling lightly, while around  
 Comes the stir of its soft sound !

Bright above and dim below  
 Is the many-colour'd Bow ;

'Tis the only light I mark,  
 Till the mountain-tops grow dark,  
 And uplooking I espy  
 Shining glow-worms in the sky ;

Then I hear the runlet's call,  
 And the voice o' the waterfall  
 Growing louder, and 'tis cold  
 As I guide my flocks to fold ;  
 But no City, great or small,  
 Have I ever seen at all !

## JAMES RHOADES

CCXLII

TO TWO IN INDIA  
(Of Janet, aged 5)

To-day I saw your little Jan,  
 You two in India far away,  
 A dainty sylph that laughed and ran  
 Upon the summer lawns at play :  
 Dark-eyed with elfin locks of gold,  
 A medley quaint of grave and gay,  
 Of coy and forward, young and old—  
 I saw your little Jan to-day.

She paused amidst her paradise,  
 A lofty scorn was in her ken,  
 Half scanning with reluctant eyes  
 The monster, me. A sprite, a wren,  
 The shy beginnings of a girl,  
 A saucy nymph, a wayward fay,  
 A dewdrop prisoned in a pearl—  
 I saw your little Jan to-day.

Anon to battledore she sped,  
 Or turned with flying puss to fly,  
 Or seized the terrier by the head,  
 Unconscious of her cruelty.

Her pout is an incarnate kiss,  
 She smiles, a sunbeam strikes the may !  
 Her whim is law : you'll know by this  
 I saw your little Jan to-day.

No news I send you : 'tis the heart  
 In exile hungers, not the brain :  
 What need to prate of Church and mart,  
 Or Curzon and his coming reign ?  
 Of statesman or of diplomat  
 The more that's said, the more's to say ;  
 Kingdoms may wane, but what of that ?—  
 I saw your little Jan to-day.

## CCXLIII

*From 'LOVELINESS IN MINIATURE'*

Little maiden, fairy May  
 Fairer than all song can say,  
 Buoyant as the breeze of spring,  
 Blithe as butterflies a-wing,  
 Pure and fine the soul must be  
 That can thus ethereally,  
 And in earthly mould, express  
 All its own unearthliness.

Like the sudden smiles that flit  
 (Spring comes back to think of it)  
 O'er the face of April; seen  
 But to vanish and have been,  
 So the swift vicissitude  
 Of each gay and pensive mood ;  
 Sweet at rest thou art, and sweet  
 Roving, sweetest when the feet,  
 That will neither walk nor stay,  
 Dance adown the common way.

*A CHILDREN'S SONG*

Every day from morn to night  
Love and laughter and heart's delight,  
Every night from eve till morn  
Dewy dreams by the Angels borne :  
Only believe, and it all comes true,  
This is our message to you and you :  
This is the charm we children weave  
Down in the meadows of make-believe.

*List to the lilt of the children's song !  
Never a thought or fear of wrong !  
Little tongues utter it,  
Little hearts flutter it,  
Flutter and utter it all day long.*

Nothing is real that brings annoy,  
Earth brims over with unseen joy :  
Lonely wanderer, shut your eyes,  
Golden palaces gleam and rise,  
Golden lovers appear, to woo ;  
Only believe, and it all comes true ;  
This is the spell the Wee Folk weave  
Round the believers in make-believe.

Can you not see them, can you not hear,  
Thronging the marge of our magic mere,  
Couched on a bull-rush-tip for bed,  
Hanging in air on a spider's thread,  
Or, if the windy ways they'd track,  
Mounted aloft on dragon-fly-back ?  
These are the joys our eyes receive  
Here in the meadows of make-believe.

Ah ! but why do you doubt, or why  
Sadden, and so grow old and die ?  
' We have forgotten to laugh,' you say,  
' Can we again grow young and gay—

Only believe that the good is true ?  
 Why, it is all there *is* to do,  
 All that we children learn to weave  
 Down in the meadows of make-believe.

*List to the lilt of the children's song !*  
*Never a thought or fear of wrong !*  
*Little tongues utter it,*  
*Little hearts flutter it,*  
*Flutter and utter it all day long.*

EDWARD DOWDEN

CCXLV

*A CHILD'S NOONDAY SLEEP*

Because you sleep, my child, with breathing light  
 As heave of the June sea,  
 Because your lips' soft petals dewy-bright  
 Dispart so tenderly ;

Because the slumbrous warmth is on your cheek  
 Up from the hushed heart sent,  
 And in this midmost noon when winds are weak  
 No cloud lies more content ;

Because nor song of bird, nor lamb's keen call  
 May reach you sunken deep,  
 Because your lifted arm I thus let fall  
 Heavy with perfect sleep ;

Because all will is drawn from you, all power,  
 And Nature through dark roots  
 Will hold and nourish you for one sweet hour  
 Amid her flowers and fruits ;

Therefore though tempests gather, and the gale  
 Through autumn skies will roar,  
 Though Earth sent up to heaven the ancient wail  
 Heard by dead Gods of yore ;

Though spectral faiths contend, and for her course  
     The soul confused must try,  
 While through the whirl of atoms and of force  
     Looms an abandoned sky ;

Yet know I, Peace abides, of earth's wild things  
     Centre, and ruling thence ;  
 Behold, a spirit folds her budded wings  
     In confident innocence.

## FREDERIC W. H. MYERS

CCXLVI

*AS LITTLE CHILDREN*

Who with prayers has overtaken  
 Those glad hours when he would waken  
 To the sound of branches shaken  
     By an early song and wild,—  
 When the golden leaves would flicker,  
 And the loving thoughts come thicker,  
 And the thrill of life beat quicker  
     In the sweet heart of the child ?

CCXLVII

*INNOCENCE*

Thro' what new world, this happy hour,  
 What wild romance, what faery bower,  
     Are Nelly's fancies flown ?  
 The dreamy eyes, the eager mind,  
 Of all imagined homes shall find  
     None sweeter than her own.

The best is truest ; that was best  
 When Nelly, heart and soul at rest,  
     Knelt at the vesper-prayer ;  
 No poet's dream, methought, could shed  
 O'er that unconscious childly head  
     So high a light and fair.

For innocence is Eden still ;  
 Round the pure heart, the loving will,  
     Heaven's hosts encamped abide ;  
 A Presence that I may not name  
 Thro' souls unknowing guilt or shame  
     Walks in the eventide.

## CCXLVIII

*TO ALICE'S PICTURE*

Unconscious child, fair pictured Phantasy !  
 More than thy song I from those lips have heard,  
 More than thy thought have guessed in look and  
     word,  
 More than thyself mine eyes adore in thee !  
 Thou art the promise of Earth's joy to be,—  
 Days to our days by Fate how far preferred !  
 By stranger loveliness more softly stirred,  
 By purer passions taught tranquillity.  
 Nay, hoped I not thro' Death's swift-soaring ways  
     Mine own poor self some glory unknown to  
     know,—  
 If, slowly darkening from delightful days,  
     I to mere night must gird myself and go,—  
 Then on thy face I should not dare to gaze  
     For wild rebellion and for yearning woe.

## EDWARD CARPENTER

## CCXLIX

*THE BABE*

The trio perfect : the man, the woman, and the  
     babe :  
 And herein all Creation.  
 The two, with wonder in their eyes, from oppo-  
     site worlds  
 Of sex, of ancestry, pursuits, traditions,

Each other suddenly, amazed, confronting—  
A nameless glory each in each surmising.

A frenzy as of Gods—

Imperial rage, flinging the goods of the world  
aside as dross, to reach to a priceless  
treasure :

[He madly invasive,

She deeply wise, and drawing farther back

Even to the gates of Paradise as he approaches :]

Strange ecstasy of warfare !

Seisin and ravishment of souls and bodies,

Veils rent asunder,

Heaven opening measureless, overhead, in  
splendour,

And all life changed, transfigured !

And then a calm.

Weeks of humdrum and mortal commonplace,

And months perchance in monotone of toil,

But still behind it all some deep remembrance,

Some sure reliance,

And sweet and secret knowledge in each other.

And then the Babe :

A tiny perfect sea-shell on the shore

By the waves gently laid (the awful waves !)—

By trembling hands received—a folded message—

A babe yet slumbering, with a ripple on its face

Remindful of the ocean.

And two twined forms that overbend it, smiling,  
And wonder to what land Love must have  
journeyed,

Who brought this back—this word of sweetest  
meaning :

*Two lives made one, and visible as one.*

And herein all Creation.

CCL

*ALICE*

With little red frock in the fire-light, in the  
 lingering April evening—  
 (The moonlight over the tree-tops just beginning  
 to shine in at the cottage door)—  
 Her big brown eyes and comical big mouth for  
 very gladness unresting, like a small brown  
 fairy—  
 She stands, the five-year-old child.

Then, so gentle, with tiny tripping speech, and  
 with a little wave of the hand—  
 ‘Good-night,’ she says to the fire and to the  
 moon,  
 And kissing the elder wearier faces,  
 Runs off to bed and to sleep in the lap of heaven

## ROBERT BRIDGES

CCLI

*BE LIKE ONE OF THESE*

When I see childhood on the threshold seize  
 The prize of life from age and likelihood,  
 I mourn time’s change that will not be with-  
 stood,  
 Thinking how Christ said *Be like one of these.*  
 For in the forest among many trees  
 Scarce one in all is found that hath made good  
 The virgin pattern of its slender wood,  
 That courtesied in joy to every breeze ;

But scath’d, but knotted trunks that raise on  
 high  
 Their arms in stiff contortion, strain’d and bare ;  
 Whose patriarchal crowns in sorrow sigh.

So, little children, ye—nay, nay, ye ne'er  
 From me shall learn how sure the change and  
     nigh,  
 When ye shall share our strength and mourn to  
     share.

## CCLII

*POOR CHILD*

On a mournful day  
 When my heart was lonely,  
 O'er and o'er my thought  
     Conned but one thing only.

Thinking how I lost  
 Wand'ring in the wild-wood  
 The companion self  
     Of my careless childhood.

How, poor child, it was  
 I shall ne'er discover,  
 But 'twas just when he  
     Grew to be thy lover,

With thine eyes of trust  
 And thy mirth, whereunder  
 All the world's hope lay  
     In thy heart of wonder.

Now, beyond regrets  
 And faint memories of thee,  
 Saddest is, poor child,  
     That I cannot love thee.

## CCLIII

*MILLICENT*

Thou dimpled Millicent, of merry guesses,  
 Strong-limb'd and tall, tossing thy wayward  
     tresses,  
 What mystery of the heart can so surprise  
 The mirth and music of thy brimming eyes ?

Pale-brow, thou knowest not and diest to learn  
 The mortal secret that doth in thee burn ;  
 With look imploring ' If you love me, tell,  
 What is it in me that you love so well ? '

And suddenly thou stakest all thy charms,  
 And leapest on me ; and in thy circling arms  
 When almost stifled with their wild embrace,  
 I feel thy hot tears sheltering on my face.

SARAH CHAUNCEY WOOLSEY  
 (SUSAN COOLIDGE)

CCLIV

*THE CRADLE-TOMB  
 IN KING HENRY VII.'S CHAPEL*

A little rudely-sculptured bed,  
 With shadowing folds of marble lace,  
 And quilt of marble primly spread,  
 And folded round a baby's face ;

Smoothly the mimic coverlet,  
 With royal blazonries bedight,  
 Hangs as by tender fingers set  
 And straightened for a last good-night.

And traced upon the pillowing stone  
 A dent is seen, as if, to bless  
 That quiet sleep, some grieving one  
 Had leaned and left a soft impress.

It seems no more than yesterday  
 Since that sad mother, down the stair  
 And down the long aisle, stole away  
 And left her darling sleeping there.

But dust upon the cradle lies—  
 And those who prized the baby so,  
 And decked her couch with heavy sighs,  
 Are turned to dust long years ago.

Above the peaceful pillow'd head  
 Three centuries brood ; and strangers peep  
 And wonder at the carven bed—  
 But not unwept the baby's sleep.

For wistful mother-eyes are blurred  
 With sudden mists, as lingerers stray,  
 And the old dusts are roused and stirred  
 By the warm tear-drops of to-day.

Soft, furtive hands caress the stone,  
 And hearts, o'erleaping place and age,  
 Melt into memories and own  
 A thrill of common parentage.

Men die, but sorrow never dies—  
 The crowding years divide in vain,  
 And the wide world is knit with ties  
 Of common brotherhood in pain—

Of common share in grief and loss,  
 And heritage in the immortal bloom  
 Of love, which, flowering round the Cross,  
 Made beautiful a baby's tomb.

## WILLIAM CANTON

CCLV

*LAUS INFANTIUM*

In praise of little children I will say  
 God first made man, then found a better way  
 For woman, but His third way was the best :  
 Of all created things the loveliest  
 And most divine are children. Nothing here  
 Can be to us more precious or more dear.  
 And though, when God saw all His works were  
 good,  
 There was no rosy flower of babyhood,  
 'Twas said of children in a later day  
 That none could enter Heaven save such as they.

The earth, which feels the flowering of a thorn,  
 Was glad, O little child, when you were born ;  
 The earth, which thrills when skylarks scale the  
     blue,  
 Soared up itself to God's own Heaven in you.  
 And Heaven, which loves to lean down and to glass  
 Its beauty in each dewdrop on the grass—  
 Heaven laughed to find your face so pure and fair,  
 And left, O little child, its reflex there.

## CCLVI

*BUBBLE-BLOWING*

Our plot is small, but sunny limes  
     Shut out all cares and troubles,  
 And there my little girl at times  
     And I sit blowing bubbles.

The screaming swifts race to and fro,  
     Bees cross the ivied paling,  
 Draughts lift and set the globes we blow  
     In freakish currents sailing.

They glide, they dart, they soar, they break,  
     Oh, joyous little daughter !  
 What lovely coloured worlds we make,  
     What crystal flowers of water !

One, green and rosy, slowly drops ;  
     One soars and shines a minute,  
 And carries to the lime-tree tops  
     Our home, reflected in it.

The gable, with cream rose in bloom,  
     She sees from roof to basement ;  
 ' Oh, father, there's your little room ! '  
     She cries in glad amazement.

To her, enchanted with the gleam,  
     The glamour and the glory,  
 The bubble home's a home of dream,  
     And I must tell its story :

Tell what we did, and how we played,  
And lived, divinely double—  
A father and his merry maid  
Whose world was in a bubble !

## CCLVII

*A PHILOSOPHER*

Yes, you may let them creep about the rug,  
And stir the fire ! Aha ! that's bright and snug,  
To think these mites—ay, nurse, unfold the  
screen !—

Should be as ancient as the Miocene ;  
That ages back beneath a palm-tree's shade  
These rosy little quadrupeds have played,  
Have cried for moons or mammoths, and have  
blacked  
Their faces round the Drift Man's fire—in  
fact,  
That ever since the articulate race began  
These babes have been the joy and plague of  
man !

Unnoticed by historian and sage,  
These bright-eyed chits have been from age  
to age

The one supreme majority. I find  
Mankind have been their slaves, and woman-  
kind

Their worshippers ; and both have lived in  
dread  
Of time and tyrants ; toiled and wept and  
bled,

Because of some quaint elves they called their  
own.

Had little ones in Egypt been unknown,  
No Pharaoh would have had the power,  
methinks,  
To pile the Pyramids or carve the Sphinx.

Take them to bed, nurse ; but, before she goes,  
 Papa must toast his little woman's toes.  
 Strange that such feeble hands and feet as  
     these  
 Have sped the lamp-race of the centuries !

## CCLVIII

*THE LITTLE SHOES*

These little shoes !—How proud she was of these !  
 Can you forget how, sitting on your knees,  
 She used to prattle volubly, and raise  
 Her tiny feet to win your wondering praise ?  
 Was life too rough for feet so softly shod,  
 That now she walks in Paradise with God,  
 Leaving but these—whereon to dote and muse—  
     These little shoes ?

1870

## CCLIX

*THE GOD AND THE SCHOOLBOY*

Upon a time, among the folk who sought  
 Surcease of suffering from Asklepios,  
 Was brought a schoolboy from the white-walled  
     town  
 Upon the rocky point—Euphanes, frail,  
 And fever-flushed, and weak with grievous pain ;  
 And as the lad, beneath the clement stars,  
 Lay wandering in his mind, and dreamed per-  
     chance  
 Of sailing little triremes on the shore,  
 Or making, it might be, a locust cage  
 With reeds and stalks of asphodel beneath  
 The trellised vines, it seemed as though the god  
 Stood by him in the holy night and spoke :—  
 ‘ What wilt thou give me, little playfellow,  
 If I shall cure thy sickness ? ’ And the lad,  
 Thinking what pleasure schoolboys have in these,

Replied : ' I'll give thee my ten marbles, god ! ' Asklepios laughed, right gladdened with the gift, And said : ' Then, truly, I will make thee well ! ' And lo ! when morning whitened on the hills, And in the valley's dusk the sacred cock Clapped wings and sang, the urchin went forth whole !

Full four-and-twenty centuries ago  
Euphanes saw the god ; and yesterday  
The pillar bearing record of the cure  
Was dug from wreck of war and drift of years.  
' *Ten marbles ! quoth the child. Asklepios*  
*laughed ;*  
*But on the morrow forth the lad went whole.*'  
Thus closely had the Greek in ancient times—  
Through some prophetic prompting of pure love  
God's unfulfilled events divining—drawn  
Man's heart unto the human heart in God.

JOHN BANNISTER TABB

CCLX

*BEDTIME : THE FIRST CHRISTMAS*  
(*At the Manger*)

When first her Christmas watch to keep  
Came down the silent angel, Sleep,  
With snowy sandals shod,  
Beholding what His mother's hands  
Had wrought, with softer swaddling-bands  
She swathed the Son of God.

Then, skilled in mysteries of night,  
With tender visions of delight  
She wreathed His resting place,  
Till, wakened by a warmer glow  
Than heaven itself had yet to show,  
He saw His mother's face.

## CCLXI

*SURVIVAL*

The tempest past—  
    A home in ruin laid ;  
But lo ! where last  
    The little children played  
At hide-and-seek,  
A footprint small  
Pleads silently,  
As if afraid to speak.  
‘ Behold in me  
A memory,  
The least and last of all ! ’

## GEORGE BARLOW

## CCLXII

*THE DEAD CHILD*

But yesterday she played with childish things,  
    With toys and painted fruit.  
To-day she may be speeding on bright wings  
    Beyond the stars ! We ask. The stars are  
        mute.

But yesterday her doll was all in all ;  
    She laughed and was content.  
To-day she will not answer, if we call : .  
    She dropp'd no toys to show the road she went.

But yesterday she smiled and ranged with art  
    Her playthings on the bed.  
To-day and yesterday are leagues apart !  
    She will not smile to-day, for she is dead.

## EDMUND GOSSE

CCLXIII

*TO TERESA*

Dear child of mine, the wealth of whose warm  
hair

Hangs like ripe clusters of the apricot,  
Thy blue eyes, gazing, comprehend me not,  
But love me, and for love alone I care ;  
Thou listenest with a shy and serious air,  
Like some Sabrina from her weedy grot  
Outpeeping coyly when the noon is hot  
To watch some shepherd piping unaware.  
'Twas not for thee I sang, dear child ;—and yet  
Would that my song could reach such ears as  
thine,  
Pierce to young hearts unsullied by the fret  
Of years in their white innocence divine ;  
Crowned with a wreath of buds still dewy-wet,  
O what a fragrant coronal were mine !

## EDMOND GORE ALEXANDER HOLMES

CCLXIV

*ON THE DEATH OF HIS FIRST-BORN SON*

My first-born boy, whose beautiful dead face  
Watching, I marvelled what mysterious charm  
Had changed that look of anguish and alarm  
To radiant peace and more than mortal grace,—  
So passing fair that, for a moment's space,  
Methought an angel held thee safe from harm,  
Thy head soft-pillowed on her fondling arm,  
Ere she upbore thee to the better place :—  
'Twas but a little wound that pierced my  
heart,  
Dealt by the dagger of that last long kiss :

Thy brother came and played his baby part  
With such sweet skill, that in my new-found  
bliss

I learned my loss ; and now Time's magic art,  
Which heals all other wounds, but deepens this.

## CCLXV

*CHILDHOOD'S HOME*

I passed through the open gateway and under  
the bending trees :

The boughs of the stooping beeches stirred in the  
summer breeze :

The branching shadows fluttered as asleep on  
the lawn they lay :

And up through the sunny meadow the avenue  
wound its way.

I passed through the open gateway and I was a  
child again :

The grass and the leaves were sparkling in jewels  
of last night's rain :

But lo ! a turn in the pathway clouded my eyes  
with tears ;

And I stood and gazed in rapture on the home  
of my early years.

The same—and yet I marvelled, for surely of  
old it stood

Fronting a boundless meadow,—on the skirts of  
a sombre wood,—

With a stately hill behind it, from whose height  
I used to gaze

To where the horizon bounded the world of my  
childish days.

But the hill was a little hillock—the wood was  
a little grove :

'Twas only a little paddock through which I  
loved to rove :

I climbed, but the wizard fancy had somewhere  
lost his wand :  
I looked to the far horizon, but the whole world  
lay beyond.

Yet the grass had its wonted verdure—the sun  
had its wonted gold—  
The raindrops trembled and sparkled, as ever in  
days of old :  
And clouds were ne'er more fleecy, and never a  
fresher breeze  
Passed with a crisper murmur through depths of  
the greenwood trees.

And I wondered if one of the dear ones, who left  
us and went his way  
Into the kingdom of twilight misty and cold and  
grey,  
Could rise from the depths of silence and come  
for a little while,  
And hear the breezes rustle and see the green  
earth smile ;—

Would the earth he had left behind him—the  
earth he had loved so well—  
That once was higher than heaven, and deeper  
than depths of hell—  
Seem now but a mote in the sunbeam, a drop in  
the water race,  
Its life the pulse of a moment—a foothold its  
orb of space ?

Would he learn that its ancient limits, now  
grown so narrow and near,  
Had veiled from imagination the skirts of a  
boundless sphere ?  
Would he look to the utmost verges that ever  
his feet had trod,  
And still find far beyond them the world of the  
Heaven of God ?

Yet perchance as he gazed around him a tear of  
regret might rise,  
And blot for a passing moment all else but earth  
from his eyes :  
He would murmur ' Oh God, I know Thee in the  
least of Thy works complete :  
It is all as of old I left it—, and then it was oh !  
how sweet.'

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

CCLXVI

*THE LAMPLIGHTER*

My tea is nearly ready and the sun has left the  
sky ;  
It's time to take the window to see Leerie going  
by ;  
For every night at teatime and before you take  
your seat,  
With lantern and with ladder he comes posting  
up the street.

Now Tom would be a driver and Maria go to  
sea,  
And my papa's a banker and as rich as he can be ;  
But I, when I am stronger and can choose what  
I'm to do,  
O Leerie, I'll go round at night and light the  
lamps with you !

For we are very lucky, with a lamp before the  
door,  
And Leerie stops to light it as he lights so many  
more ;  
And O ! before you hurry by with ladder and  
with light,  
O Leerie, see a little child and nod to him to-  
night !

## CCLXVII

*THE UNSEEN PLAYMATE*

When children are playing alone on the green,  
 In comes the playmate that never was seen.  
 When children are happy and lonely and good,  
 The Friend of the Children comes out of the wood.

Nobody heard him and nobody saw,  
 He is a picture you never could draw,  
 But he's sure to be present, abroad or at home,  
 When children are happy and playing alone.

He lies in the laurels, he runs on the grass,  
 He sings when you tinkle the musical glass ;  
 Whene'er you are happy and cannot tell why,  
 The Friend of the Children is sure to be by !

He loves to be little, he hates to be big,  
 'Tis he that inhabits the caves that you dig ;  
 'Tis he when you play with your soldiers of tin  
 That sides with the Frenchmen and never can win.

'Tis he, when at night you go off to your bed,  
 Bids you go to your sleep and not trouble your  
     head ;

For wherever they're lying, in cupboard or shelf,  
 'Tis he will take care of your playthings himself !

## CCLXVIII

*SHADOW MARCH*

All round the house is the jet-black night ;  
 It stares through the window-pane ;  
 It crawls in the corners, hiding from the light,  
 And it moves with the moving flame.

Now my little heart goes a-beating like a drum,  
     With the breath of the Bogie in my hair ;  
 And all round the candle the crooked shadows  
     come  
 And go marching along up the stair.

The shadow of the balusters, the shadow of the lamp,  
 The shadow of the child that goes to bed —  
 All the wicked shadows coming tramp, tramp,  
 tramp,  
 With the black night overhead.

## CCLXIX

*ENVOY TO MINNIE*

The red room with the giant bed  
 Where none but elders laid their head ;  
 The little room where you and I  
 Did for awhile together lie  
 And, simple suitor,—I your hand  
 In decent marriage did demand ;  
 The great day nursery, best of all,  
 With pictures pasted on the wall  
 And leaves upon the blind—  
 A pleasant room wherein to wake  
 And hear the leafy garden shake  
 And rustle in the wind—  
 And pleasant there to lie in bed  
 And see the pictures overhead—  
 The wars about Sebastopol,  
 The grinning guns along the wall,  
 The daring escalade,  
 The plunging ships, the bleating sheep,  
 The happy children ankle-deep  
 And laughing as they wade :  
 All these are vanished clean away,  
 And the old manse is changed to-day ;  
 It wears an altered face  
 And shields a stranger race.  
 The river, on from mill to mill,  
 Flows past our childhood's garden still ;  
 But ah ! we children never more  
 Shall watch it from the water-door !  
 Below the yew—it still is there—

Our phantom voices haunt the air  
As we were still at play,  
And I can hear them call and say :  
*' How far is it to Babylon ? '*

Ah, far enough, my dear,  
Far, far enough from here—  
Yet you have farther gone !  
*' Can I get there by candlelight ? '*  
So goes the old refrain.  
I do not know—perchance you might—  
But only children hear it right,  
Ah, never to return again !  
The eternal dawn, beyond a doubt,  
Shall break on hill and plain,  
And put all stars and candles out  
Ere we be young again.

To you in distant India, these  
I send across the seas,  
Nor count it far across.  
For which of us forgets  
The Indian cabinets,  
The bones of antelope, the wings of albatross,  
The pied and painted birds and beans,  
The junks and bangles, beads and screens,  
The gods and sacred bells,  
And the loud-humming, twisted shells ?  
The level of the parlour floor  
Was honest, homely, Scottish shore ;  
But when we climbed upon a chair,  
Behold the gorgeous East was there !

Be this a fable ; and behold  
Me in the parlour as of old,  
And Minnie just above me set  
In the quaint Indian cabinet !  
Smiling and kind, you grace a shelf  
Too high for me to reach myself.  
Reach down a hand, my dear, and take  
These rhymes for old acquaintance' sake !

## CCLXX

*ENVOY TO ANY READER*

As from the house your mother sees  
 You playing round the garden trees,  
 So you may see, if you will look  
 Through the windows of this book,  
 Another child, far, far away,  
 And in another garden, play.  
 But do not think you can at all,  
 By knocking on the window, call  
 That child to hear you. He intent  
 Is all on his play-business bent.  
 He does not hear ; he will not look,  
 Nor yet be lured out of this book.  
 For, long ago, the truth to say,  
 He has grown up and gone away,  
 And it is but a child of air  
 That lingers in the garden there.

## ANNIE MATHESON

## CCLXXI

*TO A LITTLE CHILD*

Clear eyes of heaven's chosen hue  
 When not a cloud is seen above  
 To fleck the warm untroubled blue,  
 A little laughing face of love ;  
 A boundless energy of life  
 In dimpled arms and rosy feet ;  
 No breath of care, no touch of strife,  
 Has dulled thy glad heart's rhythmic beat.  
 So girt about with golden light,  
 By shadows still so little vexed,  
 That many a weary anxious wight  
 Grows in thy presence less perplexed,

Our smiles come at thy fairy beck,  
 Frowns pass away at thy caress ;  
 When thy soft arms are round my neck  
 I feel God's wondrous tenderness.

WILLIAM JAMES DAWSON

CCLXXII

*THE SLEEPING MOTHER*

How still the vast depths of this City's heart !  
 At last the ever-moaning tide of life  
 Is quiet, and, sweet mother, wearied thou  
 With the babe's wailing and its piteous strife,  
 Thou too, worn in love's toil, art tranquil now.  
 I watch thee, and I think how fair thou art  
 In this deep-lidded sleep ; the uncoiled hair  
 Piled round the high clear brow, one white arm  
     bare  
 On which lies warm the little golden head  
 Wearier even than thine. And now I see  
 How sunk thine eyes are, and that forehead fair,  
 How fretted with faint lines unmerited  
 So early ; and reproach lays hold of me,  
 That I have led thee from thy pastures green  
 To these steep slopes where we are bowed with  
     care.  
 Yet if thou should'st awake and read my thought,  
 I know thine eyes would fill with light serene,  
 And thou would'st say, ' This burden have I  
     sought,  
 This service is a perfect liberty ;  
 This City of Love, whose pulse of love beats  
     quick  
 With strenuous tasks, is it not better far  
 Than virgin pastures, where the air is thick  
 With golden languors and a dull content ? '  
 Great joy hath woman when that time is spent,  
 And on her life there rises that new star  
 Which leads her feet where mother-raptures are.

MARGARET L. WOODS

CCLXXIII

*THE CHILD ALONE*

'Tis a pleasant thing to be free.  
 Nobody knows, nobody guesses  
 What I am doing, where I am staying.  
 'Where is Marjorie?' mother is saying.  
 Julie, who loves to sit making her dresses,  
     Says, 'She is playing  
     Under the tree.'

No—through the jungle Marjorie passes.  
 Sometimes I run, sometimes I stand  
 Still in a covert of high waving grasses,  
     Over my head.  
 Wilderness ways, uninhabited land,  
     Lone I explore.

Hares in the grass, mice where I tread,  
     Look up and wonder;  
     Or the squirrel flashes  
     Red as he dashes  
 Over the leafy forest floor.  
     Then in the tree  
     High sits he  
     And mocks me under;  
 While all of them, all of them wonder, wonder  
     What I can be.

I was a child, a little child,  
 I am a happy creature wild.  
 I used to have to run or walk  
     As I was bid, be still or talk;  
     To shun the wind or sun or show'r,  
     And then come in at such an hour.  
 I was a child, a little child,  
 I am a happy creature wild.

For see I wander like a deer  
That sniffs about the furrowed bole  
Of some great tree, or starts in fear  
From every leaf that trembles near ;  
Or neighing like a frolic foal  
That prances in a field at play,  
I gallop farther on my way.  
Sometimes a beech-mast tumbles thro',  
I strip it daintily to find  
The nut within its wooden rind,  
And nibbling sit as squirrels do.  
I was a child, a little child,  
I am a happy creature wild.

Now, now again,  
Reversing the spell,  
Turning this plain  
Little ring on my finger,  
See I regain  
Form of a child, spirit as well.  
Yet I am free, no one can tell  
Margie to haste, come and not linger.  
Turn it again, thrice must it turn,  
Thrice the sunlight flicker and burn  
Deep in the heart of its single gem—  
And see I ride from Jerusalem.

I am a knight ; the paynim horde  
Have felt the weight of this good sword  
About the sepulchre of Our Lord.

'Tis a sinister woodland deep and wide,  
Alone I ride.  
Saint Hubert scatter the demon breed !  
    Mary Mother be my guide !  
Up the glade at rushing speed,  
What comes shining, what comes sweeping ?  
    'Tis a band of mailed men  
    And a lady passing fair,  
    Whom they carry to their den  
    Gleaming in her golden hair.

Ha ! I come, like lightning leaping,  
 Thrust and hew mid caitiff clamour.  
 Beat the stubborn thorn-bush down !  
 Cleave and rend the bracken's crown !  
 Not a stalk be left upright !  
 Now they know the paynim's hammer,  
 Now they know King Richard's knight.

Turn, turn again  
 Magical ring.  
 I am a Dane  
 Cunning and brave,  
 A pirate king.

Swiftly I come over the wave.

The shore, the Saxon town I see.  
 The smoke hangs blue on roof and tree  
 At evening over the little town.  
 I hear the bells in the grey church tow'r.  
 With fire and sword at midnight hour  
 I mean to harry and burn it down.  
 But fierce as a wolf, as a raven wise,  
 I come at first in a deep disguise  
 To the little town.  
 And when I climb to the nursery yonder  
 They'll call me Marjorie, and wonder  
 Why I should want to run away  
 And be as any rabbit wild ;  
 For I shall seem to be a child  
 Named Marjorie. What would they say  
 If they could know it was instead  
 A pirate that they put to bed ?

#### CCLXXIV

#### *ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT*

Alas ! the little child is dead.  
 O sorrow for the downy head  
 That used to keep his mother's arm  
 And bosom warm,

And now the chilling earth instead  
Must hide, for he is dead !

Mourn, mothers, ye who know how sweet  
They were, the blossom-coloured feet  
That in our dusty pathways yet  
    No print had set,  
So that the world will scarcely mark  
Their little track into the dark.  
Only for one the baby feet  
    Have left earth incomplete.

They coldly lie, but she before  
The hearth will chafe them now no more,  
Nor swing the boy to let him leap,  
    Who scarce could creep,  
In dainty dance upon the floor :  
    For all his play-time's o'er.

Nor from that slumber where he lies  
Shall he with blue half-wakened eyes,  
Stir at her shadow o'er him thrown  
    Or rustling gown,  
And dream a smile because her face  
Flits through some visionary place.  
She need no longer still her cries  
    Lest he unclose his eyes.

When last she wept—how many years  
Ago it seems !—he dried her tears  
With wandering touches velvet-sleek  
    Upon her cheek.  
Now on his fragile breast she bows  
Her shaken mouth and heavy brows,  
And holds him fast, while he nor fears  
    Nor wonders at her tears.

Ye mothers, let her not alone  
Make on this little dust her moan,  
Be near with looks of love and touch  
    Not over-much  
Her quivering grief with words, but wend  
With her to-day made more than friend

By ancient mysteries of Earth,  
By solemn pangs of death and birth,  
Made consecrate, apart, unknown  
Save unto you alone.

How lightly borne the little bier,  
With all its flowers ! And what is here,  
That ye in long processions go,  
    Sombre and slow,  
As who at famous obsequies  
Mourn for a world bereaved ? The wise  
Will ask in wonder and recall  
Some larger grief, or prodigal  
Rich waste of Nature ; year by year  
    Things born to disappear.

But here, within this narrow hearse,  
The mystery of the Universe  
Doth house as kingly and secure,  
    As vast and sure  
As in the marble or the lead  
That hold the world-subduing dead.  
Its bare inscription doth contain  
More than philosophers explain,  
Or mightier poets can rehearse,  
    Making immortal verse.

And who is she with veiled head ?  
She had a name, but now instead  
Another. What she was before  
    She is no more,  
Nor what she shall be. In her mind  
By ways unknown she seems to wind,  
Some endless lapse of time to tread  
    Slowly behind the dead.

Ay, this beyond her thought is true.  
The seas have shaped their shores anew,  
And stars in other courses roll  
    About the pole,  
Since first this mourning way she went.  
In Babylon she made lament,

And hath her ancient sorrow hid  
'Neath an Egyptian pyramid ;  
Yet shall through centuries waste and new  
    The unchanging road pursue.

She mightier names and powers hath known.  
For lilies on her pathway strown,  
Out of the unsounded gulf of Heaven  
    The stars were given.

The deep of Earth's divine desire  
Surged round her feet in argent fire,  
Its passionate rumour, soft, immense,  
Rose up to her through frankincense ;  
She took the moon and Hera's throne,  
    And Aphrodite's zone.

Through warring chaos, primal gloom,  
Promethean shape she seems to loom,  
Kindling her hearth with holier flame.

Around it came

Man that was beast, and where it burned  
A human fellowship he learned.  
She first his shelter, she the nurse  
Of all he is, for her the curse  
Sprung where she made the desert bloom—  
    The chain, the Titan's doom.

Adorn with flowers the darkling gate  
Where things majestic pass, with state  
Religious and with mourning eyes

Your ministries

Perform, ye mothers. Tell aloud  
How that the glorious and the proud  
The world's deep wave a moment ride  
Like foam, and fade upon its tide.  
Tell them that Life alone is great,  
    And Love and mortal Fate.

## HENRY CHARLES BEECHING

CCLXXV

*PRA YERS*

God who created me  
 Nimble and light of limb,  
 In three elements free,  
 To run, to ride, to swim :  
 Not when the sense is dim,  
 But now from the heart of joy,  
 I would remember Him :  
 Take the thanks of a boy.

Jesu, King and Lord,  
 Whose are my foes to fight,  
 Gird me with Thy sword  
 Swift and sharp and bright.  
 Thee would I serve if I might ;  
 And conquer if I can,  
 From day-dawn till night,  
 Take the strength of a man.

Spirit of Love and Truth,  
 Breathing in grosser clay,  
 The light and flame of youth,  
 Delight of men in the fray,  
 Wisdom in strength's decay ;  
 From pain, strife, wrong to be free,  
 This best gift I pray,  
 Take my spirit to Thee.

CCLXXVI

## GOING DOWNHILL ON A BICYCLE

(A Boy's Song)

With lifted feet, hands still,  
 I am poised, and down the hill  
 Dart, with heedful mind ;  
 The air goes by in a wind.

Swifter and yet more swift,  
 Till the heart with a mighty lift  
 Makes the lungs laugh, the throat cry :—  
 ‘ O bird, see ; see, bird, I fly ! ’

‘ Is this, is this your joy ?  
 O bird, then I, though a boy,  
 For a golden moment share  
 Your feathery life in air ! ’

Say, heart, is there aught like this  
 In a world that is full of bliss ?  
 ‘ Tis more than skating, bound  
 Steel-shod to the level ground.

Speed slackens now, I float  
 Awhile in my airy boat ;  
 Till, when the wheels scarce crawl,  
 My feet to the treadles fall.

Alas, that the longest hill  
 Must end in a vale ; but still,  
 Who climbs with toil, whereso’er,  
 Shall find wings waiting there.

JAMES KENNETH STEPHEN

CCLXXVII

*BLUE HILLS. AN ALLEGORY*

Years ago, in the land of my birth,  
 When my head was little above the earth,  
 I stood by the side of the grass-blades tall,  
 And a quickset hedge was a mighty wall,  
 And a measureless forest I often found  
 In a swampy acre of rush-clad ground :  
 But, when I could see it, the best of the view  
 Was a distant circle, the Hills of Blue.

Higher we grow as the long years pass,  
 And I now look down on the growing grass ;  
 I see the top where I saw the side,  
 Some beauties are lost as the view grows wide,

I see over things that I couldn't see through :  
But my limit is still the Hills of Blue.

As a child I sought them, and found them not,  
Footsore and weary, tired and hot ;  
They were still the bulwark of all I could see,  
And still at a fabulous distance from me ;  
I wondered if age and strength could teach  
How to traverse the plain, the mountains  
reach ;

Meanwhile, whatever a child might do,  
They still were far and they still were blue.

Well I've reached them at last, those distant  
Hills ;

I've reached their base through a world of ills ;  
I have toiled and laboured and wandered far,  
With my constant eyes on a shifting star :  
And ever, as nearer I came, they grew,  
Larger and larger, but ah ! less blue.

Green I have found them, green and brown,  
Studded with houses, o'erhanging a town,  
Feeding the plain below with streams,  
Dappled with shadows and brightening with  
beams,

Image of scenes I had left behind,  
Merely a group of the hilly kind :  
And beyond them a prospect as fair to view  
As the old, and bounded by Hills as blue.

But I will not seek those further Hills,  
Nor travel the course of the outward rills ;  
I have lost the faith of my childhood's day ;  
Let me dream (it is only a dream) while I  
may ;

I will put my belief to no cruel test :  
As I doze on this green deceptive crest,  
I will try to believe, as I used to do,  
There are some Blue Hills which are really blue.

## FRANCIS THOMPSON

CCLXXVIII

## LITTLE JESUS

*Ex ore infantium, Deus, et lactentium  
perfecisti laudem.*

Little Jesus, wast Thou shy  
Once, and just so small as I ?  
And what did it feel like to be  
Out of Heaven, and just like me ?  
Didst Thou sometimes think of *there*,  
And ask where all the angels were ?  
I should think that I would cry  
For my house all made of sky ;  
I would look about the air,  
And wonder where my angels were ;  
And at waking 'twould distress me—  
Not an angel there to dress me !

Hadst Thou ever any toys,  
Like us little girls and boys ?  
And didst Thou play in Heaven with all  
The angels that were not too tall,  
With stars for marbles ? Did the things  
Play *Can you see me ?* through their wings ?  
And did Thy Mother let Thee spoil  
Thy robes with playing on *our* soil ?  
How nice to have them always new  
In Heaven, because 'twas quite clean blue !

Didst Thou kneel at night to pray,  
And didst Thou join Thy hands, this way ?  
And did they tire sometimes, being young,  
And make the prayer seem very long ?  
And dost Thou like it best, that we  
Should join our hands to pray to Thee ?  
I used to think, before I knew,  
The prayer not said unless we do.

And did Thy Mother at the night  
 Kiss Thee, and fold the clothes in right ?  
 And didst Thou feel quite good in bed,  
 Kissed, and sweet, and Thy prayers said ?

Thou canst not have forgotten all  
 That it feels like to be small :  
 And Thou know'st I cannot pray  
 To Thee in my father's way—  
 When Thou wast so little, say,  
 Couldst Thou talk Thy Father's way ?—

So, a little Child, come down  
 And hear a child's tongue like Thy own ;  
 Take me by the hand and walk,  
 And listen to my baby-talk.  
 To Thy Father show my prayer  
 (He will look, Thou art so fair),  
 And say : ' O Father, I, Thy Son,  
 Bring the prayer of a little one.'

And He will smile, that children's tongue  
 Has not changed since Thou wast young !

## CCLXXIX

## DAISY

Where the thistle lifts a purple crown  
 Six foot out of the turf,  
 And the harebell shakes on the windy hill—  
 O the breath of the distant surf !—

The hills look over on the South,  
 And southward dreams the sea ;  
 And, with the sea-breeze hand in hand,  
 Came innocence and she.

Where 'mid the gorse the raspberry  
 Red for the gatherer springs,  
 Two children did we stray and talk  
 Wise, idle, childish things.

She listened with big-lipped surprise,  
Breast-deep 'mid flower and spine :  
Her skin was like a grape, whose veins  
Run snow instead of wine.

She knew not those sweet words she spake,  
Nor knew her own sweet way ;  
But there's never a bird, so sweet a song  
Thronged in whose throat that day !

Oh, there were flowers in Storrington  
On the turf and on the spray ;  
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills  
Was the Daisy-flower that day !

Her beauty smoothed earth's furrowed face.  
She gave me tokens three :—  
A look, a word of her winsome mouth,  
And a wild raspberry.

A berry red, a guileless look,  
A still word,—strings of sand !  
And yet they made my wild, wild heart  
Fly down to her little hand.

For, standing artless as the air,  
And candid as the skies,  
She took the berries with her hand,  
And the love with her sweet eyes.

The fairest things have fleetest end :  
Their scent survives their close,  
But the rose's scent is bitterness  
To him that loved the rose.

She looked a little wistfully,  
Then went her sunshine way :—  
The sea's eye had a mist on it,  
And the leaves fell from the day.

She went her unremembering way,  
She went, and left in me  
The pang of all the partings gone,  
And partings yet to be.

She left me marvelling why my soul  
     Was sad that she was glad ;  
     At all the sadness in the sweet,  
         The sweetness in the sad.

Still, still I seemed to see her, still  
     Look up with soft replies,  
     And take the berries with her hand,  
         And the love with her lovely eyes.

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,  
     That is not paid with moan ;  
     For we are born in other's pain,  
         And perish in our own.

## CCLXXX

*TO OLIVIA*

I fear to love thee, Sweet, because  
     Love's the ambassador of loss ;  
     White flake of childhood, clinging so  
     To my soiled raiment, thy shy snow  
     At tenderest touch will shrink and go.  
     Love me not, delightful child !  
     My heart, by many snares beguiled,  
     Has grown timorous and wild.  
     It would fear thee not at all,  
     Wert thou not so harmless-small.  
     Because thy arrows, not yet dire,  
     Are still unbarbed with destined fire,  
     I fear thee more than hadst thou stood  
     Full-panoplied in womanhood.

## CCLXXXI

*TO MONICA THOUGHT DYING*

You, O the piteous you !  
     Who all the long night through  
     Anticipatedly  
     Disclose yourself to me

Already in the ways  
Beyond our human comfortable days ;  
How can you deem what Death  
Impitiably saith  
To me, who listening wake  
For your poor sake ?  
When a grown woman dies,  
You know we think unceasingly  
What things she said, how sweet, how wise ;  
And these do make our misery.  
But you were (you to me  
The dead anticipatedly !)  
You—eleven years, was't not, or so ?—  
Were just a child, you know ;  
And so you never said  
Things sweet immeditately and wise  
To interdict from closure my wet eyes :  
But foolish things, my dead, my dead !  
Little and laughable,  
Your age that fitted well.  
And was it such things all unmemorable,  
Was it such things could make  
Me sob all night for your implacable sake ?

Yet, as you said to me,  
In pretty make-believe of revelry,  
So, the night long, said Death  
With his magniloquent breath ;  
(And that remembered laughter,  
Which in our daily uses followed after,  
Was all untuned to pity and to awe :)  
*'A cup of chocolate,  
One farthing is the rate,  
You drink it through a straw.'*

How could I know, how know  
Those laughing words when drenched with  
sobbing so ?  
Another voice than yours, than yours, he hath !  
My dear, was't worth his breath,  
His mighty utterance ?—yet he saith, and saith !

This dreadful Death to his own dreadfulness  
 Doth dreadful wrong,  
 This dreadful childish babble on his tongue !  
 That iron tongue, made to speak sentences  
 And wisdom insupportably complete,  
 Why should it only say the long night through,  
 In mimicry of you,—  
 '*A cup of chocolate,*  
*One farthing is the rate,*  
*You drink it through a straw, a straw, a straw !*'

Oh, of all sentences,  
 Piercingly incomplete !

Why did you teach that fatal mouth to draw,  
 Child, impermissible awe  
 From your old trivialness ?  
 Why have you done me this  
 Most unsustainable wrong,  
 And into Death's control  
 Betrayed the secret places of my soul ?—  
 Teaching him that his lips,  
 Uttering their native earthquake and eclipse,  
 Could never so avail  
 To rend from hem to hem the ultimate veil  
 Of this most desolate  
 Spirit, and leave it stripped and desecrate,—  
 Nay, never so have wrung  
 From eyes and speech weakness unmanned,  
 unmeet,  
 As when his terrible dotage to repeat  
 Its little lesson learneth at your feet ;  
 As when he sits among  
 His sepulchres, to play  
 With broken toys your hand has cast away,  
 With derelict trinkets of the darling young.  
 Why have you taught—that he might so complete  
 His awful panoply  
 From your cast playthings—why,  
 This dreadful childish babble to his tongue,  
 Dreadful and sweet ?

CCLXXXII

*THE CHILD-WOMAN*

O thou most dear !  
 Who art thy sex's complex harmony  
     God-set more facilely ;  
     To thee may love draw near  
     Without one blame or fear,  
 Unchidden save by his humility :  
 Thou Perseus' Shield wherein I view secure  
 The mirrored Woman's fateful-fair allure !  
 Whom Heaven still leaves a twofold dignity,  
 As girlhood gentle, and as boyhood free ;  
 With whom no most diaphanous webs enwind  
 The barèd limbs of the rebukeless mind.  
 Wild Dryad, all unconscious of thy tree,  
     With which indissolubly  
 The tyrannous time shall one day make thee  
     whole ;  
 Whose frank arms pass unfretted through its  
     bole :  
     Who wear'st thy femineity  
 Light as entrailèd blossoms, that shalt find  
 It erelong silver shackles unto thee :  
 Thou whose young sex is yet but in thy soul ;—  
     As hoarded in the vine  
 Hang the gold skins of undelirious wine,  
 As air sleeps, till it toss its limbs in breeze ;—  
 In whom the mystery which lures and sunders,  
     Grapples and thrusts apart, endears,  
     estranges,  
 —The dragon to its own Hesperides—  
     Is gated under slow-revolving changes,  
 Manifold doors of heavy-hingèd years :—  
     So once, ere Heaven's eyes were filled with  
     wonders  
 To see Laughter rise from Tears,  
 Lay in beauty not yet mighty,  
     Conchéd in translucencies,  
 The antenatal Aphrodite,

Caved magically under magic seas ;  
Caved dreamlessly beneath the dreamful seas.

‘ Whose sex is in thy soul ! ’

What think we of thy soul ?

Which has no parts, and cannot grow,  
Unfurled not from an embryo ;

Born of full stature, lineal to control ;

And yet a pygmy’s yoke must undergo ;  
Yet must keep pace and tarry, patient, kind,  
With its unwilling scholar, the dull, tardy mind ;  
Must be obsequious to the body’s powers,  
Whose low hands mete its paths, set ope and  
close its ways ;

Must do obeisance to the days,  
And wait the little pleasure of the hours ;

Yea, ripe for kingship, yet must be  
Captive in statuted minority !

So is all power fulfilled, as soul in thee.  
So still the ruler by the ruled takes rule,  
And wisdom weaves itself i’ the loom o’ the fool.  
The splendid sun no splendour can display,  
Till on gross things he dash his broken ray,  
From cloud and tree and flower re-tossed in  
prismy spray.

Did not obstruction’s vessel hem it in,  
Force were not force, would spill itself in vain ;  
We know the Titan by his champèd chain.  
Stay is heat’s cradle, it is rocked therein,  
And by check’s hand is burnished into light ;  
If hate were none, would love burn lowlier  
bright ?

God’s Fair were guessed scarce but for opposite  
sin ;

Yea, and His Mercy, I do think it well,  
Is flashed back from the brazen gates of Hell.

The heavens decree

All power fulfil itself as soul in thee.

For supreme Spirit subject was to clay,

And Law from its own servants learned a law,  
And Light besought a lamp unto its way,

And Awe was reined in awe,  
At one small house of Nazareth ;  
And Golgotha

Saw Breath to breathlessness resign its breath,  
And Life do homage for its crown to death.

SIR RABINDRANATH TAGORE

CCLXXXIII

*THE BEGINNING*

‘ Where have I come from, where did you pick  
me up ? ’ the baby asked its mother.  
She answered half crying, half laughing, and  
clasping the baby to her breast,—  
‘ You were hidden in my heart as its desire, my  
darling.  
You were in the dolls of my childhood’s games ;  
and when with clay I made the image of my  
god every morning, I made and unmade  
you then.  
You were enshrined with our household deity,  
in his worship I worshipped you.  
In all my hopes and my loves, in my life, in the  
life of my mother you have lived.  
In the lap of the deathless Spirit who rules our  
home you have been nursed for ages.  
When in girlhood my heart was opening its petals,  
you hovered as a fragrance about it.  
Your tender softness bloomed in my youthful  
limbs, like a glow in the sky before the sunrise.  
Heaven’s first darling, twin-born with the  
morning light, you have floated down the  
stream of the world’s life, and at last you  
have stranded on my heart.  
As I gaze on your face, mystery overwhelms me ;  
you who belong to all have become mine.  
For fear of losing you I hold you tight to my  
breast. What magic has snared the world’s  
treasure in these slender arms of mine ? ’

## CCLXXXIV

*SUPERIOR*

Mother, your baby is silly ! She is so absurdly  
childish !

She does not know the difference between the  
lights in the streets and the stars.

When we play at eating with pebbles, she thinks  
they are real food, and tries to put them  
into her mouth.

When I open a book before her and ask her to  
learn her a, b, c, she tears the leaves with  
her hands and roars for joy at nothing ;  
this is your baby's way of doing her lesson.

When I shake my head at her in anger and scold  
her and call her naughty, she laughs and  
thinks it great fun.

Everybody knows that father is away, but if in  
play I call aloud 'Father,' she looks about  
her in excitement and thinks that father is  
near.

When I hold my class with the donkeys that our  
washerman brings to carry away the clothes  
and I warn her that I am the schoolmaster,  
she will scream for no reason and call me  
dādā.

Your baby wants to catch the moon. She is so  
funny . . .

Mother, your baby is silly, she is so absurdly  
childish !

KATHARINE TYNAN HINKSON

## CCLXXXV

*THE MEETING*

As I went up and he came down, my little six-  
year boy,

Upon the stairs we met and kissed, I and my  
tender Joy.

Oh ! fond and true, as lovers do, we kissed and  
clasped and parted ;  
And I went up and he went down, refreshed and  
happy-hearted.

What need was there for any words, his face  
against my face ?  
And in the silence heart to heart spoke for a  
little space  
Of tender things, and thoughts on wings, and  
secrets none discovers ;  
And I went up and he went down, a pair of  
happy lovers.

His clinging arms about my neck, what need was  
there for words ?  
Oh, little heart that beat so fast like any fluttering  
bird's !  
' I love,' his silence said ; ' I love,' my silence  
answered duly ;  
And I went up and he went down comforted  
wonderfully.

## CCLXXXVI

## THE MOTHER

Great passions I awake that must  
Bow any woman to the dust  
With fear lest she should fail to rise  
As high as those enamoured eyes.

Now, for these flying days and sweet,  
I sit in Beauty's Mercy-Seat.  
My smiles, my favours I award,  
Since I am beautiful, adored.

They praise my cheeks, my lips, my eyes,  
With Love's most exquisite flatteries,  
Covet my hands that they may kiss  
And to their ardent bosoms press.

My foot upon the nursery stair  
 Makes them a music rich and rare ;  
 My skirt that rustles as I come  
 For very rapture strikes them dumb.

What jealousies of word and glance !  
 The light of my poor countenance  
 Lights up their world that else were drear.  
 ' But you are lovely, mother dear ! '

I go not to my grave but I  
 Know Beauty's full supremacy :  
 Like Cleopatra's self, I prove  
 The very heights and depths of Love.

So to be loved, so to be wooed,  
 Oh, more than mortal woman should !  
 What if she fail or fall behind !  
 Lord, make me worthy, keep them blind !

## SIR OWEN SEAMAN

CCLXXXVII

*IN MEMORIAM 'LEWIS CARROLL'*

Lover of children ! Fellow heir with those  
 Of whom the imperishable kingdom is !  
 No longer dreaming, now your spirit knows  
 The unimagined mysteries.

Darkly as in a glass our faces look  
 To read ourselves, if so we may, aright ;  
 You, like the maiden in your faerie book,  
 You step beyond and see the light !

The heart you wore beneath your pedant's  
 cloak  
 Only to children's hearts you gave away ;  
 Yet unaware in half the world you woke  
 The slumbering charm of childhood's day.

We older children, too, our loss lament,  
 We of the 'Table Round' remembering well  
 How he, our comrade, with his pencil lent  
 Your fancy's speech a firmer spell.

Master of rare woodcraft, by sympathy's  
 Sure touch he caught your visionary gleams  
 And made your fame, the dreamer's, one with  
 his,  
 The wise interpreter of dreams.

Farewell, but near our hearts we have you yet,  
 Holding our heritage with loving hand,  
 Who may not follow where your feet are set  
 Upon the ways of Wonderland.

ALICE MEYNELL

CCLXXXVIII

*THE SHEPHERDESS*

She walks—the lady of my delight—  
 A shepherdess of sheep.  
 Her flocks are thoughts. She keeps them white ;  
 She guards them from the steep ;  
 She feeds them on the fragrant height,  
 And folds them in for sleep.

She roams maternal hills and bright,  
 Dark valleys safe and deep.  
 Into that tender breast at night  
 The chastest stars may peep.  
 She walks—the lady of my delight—  
 A shepherdess of sheep.

She holds her little thoughts in sight,  
 Though gay they run and leap.  
 She is so circumspect and right ;  
 She has her soul to keep.  
 She walks—the lady of my delight—  
 A shepherdess of sheep.

## CCLXXXIX

*YOUR OWN FAIR YOUTH*

Your own fair youth, you care so little for it,  
 Smiling towards Heaven, you would not stay  
     the advances  
 Of time and change upon your happiest fancies.  
 I keep your golden hour and will restore it.  
 If ever, in time to come, you would explore it—  
     Your old self, whose thoughts went like last  
         year's pansies,  
 Look unto me : no mirror keeps its glances ;  
 In my unfailing praises now I store it.  
 To guard all joys of yours from Time's estranging,  
     I shall be then a treasury where your gay,  
         Happy, and pensive past unaltered is.  
 I shall be then a garden charmed from changing,  
     In which your June has never passed away.  
         Walk there awhile among my memories.

## CCXC

*THE MODERN MOTHER*

Oh, what a kiss  
 With filial passion overcharged is this !  
     To this misgiving breast  
 This child runs, as a child ne'er ran to rest  
 Upon the light heart and the unoppressed.  
  
 Unhoped, unsought !  
 A little tenderness, this mother thought  
     The utmost of her meed.  
 She looked for gratitude ; content indeed  
 With thus much that her nine years' love had  
     bought.  
  
 Nay, even with less.  
 This mother, giver of life, death, peace, distress,  
     Desired ah ! not so much  
 Thanks as forgiveness ; and the passing touch  
 Expected, and the slight, the brief caress.

O filial light  
 Strong in these childish eyes, these new, these  
 bright  
 Intelligible stars ! their rays  
 Are near the constant earth, guides in the maze,  
 Natural, true, keen in this dusk of days.

## CCXCI

## TO SYLVIA

(Two years old)

Long life to thee, long virtue, long delight,  
 A flowering early and late !  
 Long beauty, grave to thought and gay to sight,  
 A distant date !

Yet, as so many poets love to sing  
 (When young the child will die),  
 ' No autumn will destroy this lovely spring,'  
 So, Sylvia, I.

I'll write thee dapper verse and touching rhyme ;  
 ' Our eyes shall not behold—'  
 The commonplace shall serve for thee this time :  
 ' Never grow old.'

For there's another way to stop thy clock  
 Within my cherishing heart,  
 To carry thee unalterable, and lock  
 Thy youth apart :

Thy flower, for me, shall evermore be hid  
 In this close bud of thine,  
 Not, Sylvia, by thy death—O God forbid !—  
 Merely by mine.

## SIR HENRY NEWBOLT

CCXCII

*IMOGEN**(A lady of tender age)*

Ladies, where were your bright eyes glancing,  
 Where were they glancing yesternight ?  
 Saw ye Imogen dancing, dancing,  
 Imogen dancing all in white ?  
 Laughed she not with a pure delight,  
 Laughed she not with a joy serene,  
 Stepped she not with a grace entrancing,  
 Slenderly girt in silken sheen ?

All through the night from dusk to daytime  
 Under her feet the hours were swift,  
 Under her feet the hours of playtime  
 Rose and fell with a rhythmic lift :  
 Music set her adrift, adrift,  
 Music eddying towards the day  
 Swept her along as brooks in Maytime  
 Carry the freshly falling May.

Ladies, life is a changing measure,  
 Youth is a lilt that endeth soon ;  
 Pluck ye never so fast at pleasure,  
 Twilight follows the longest noon.  
 Nay, but here is a lasting boon,  
 Life for hearts that are old and chill,  
 Youth undying for hearts that treasure  
 Imogen dancing, dancing still.

## ROSAMUND MARRIOTT WATSON

CCXCIII

*A CHILD'S GARDEN*

The garden wastes : the little child is grown ;  
 Rank with high weeds and blossoms overblown,  
 His tiny territory boasts no more  
 The dainty many-coloured mien it wore

In the old time,  
When the stout toiler of the summer's prime  
Wrought in his glory, sun-flushed and bemired,  
With spade and water-can, nor ever tired,  
Yet found the bedward stair so steep to climb.

Pink and forget-me-not and mignonette,  
Red double daisies accurately set,  
We had them all by heart and more beside,  
Purple and yellow pansies, solemn-eyed  
As little owlets in their tufted bowers . . .  
The weeds have come and driven forth the  
flowers.

Summer with all her roses onward hastes.  
The garden wastes—  
This poor small garden, sweet in summers known.  
The garden wastes : the little child is grown.

How good those summers, gay and golden-lit,  
When down the walks the white-frocked form  
would flit,  
Laden and all-triumphant with its load ;  
That narrow pleaunce, and the spoils of it !  
The various spoils of it so proudly shown,  
So royally bestowed . . .  
Green wrinkled cress and rosy radish node,  
The unsunned strawberry's dimly coral cone,—  
There be none such treasures now : the child  
is grown.

The fish-tailed merchild carved in crumbling stone  
Wreathed with loose straggling roses, reigns alone,  
Th'abandoned idol still smiles gravely on.  
The other child is gone.  
New play, new paths, the old sweet hours disown ;  
Poor graven image on your rain-worn throne  
Smiling the foolish smile,  
Rose petals fall around you yet awhile,  
Nor may I mourn this little plot defaced,  
The bare nest whence the fledging bird has flown  
*His* garden waste :  
The little child is grown.

## RUDYARD KIPLING

CCXCIV

*THE SERVING-MEN*

I keep six honest serving-men  
 (They taught me all I knew) ;  
 Their names are What and Why and When  
 And How and Where and Who.

I send them over land and sea,  
 I send them east and west ;  
 But after they have worked for me,  
 I give them all a rest.

I let them rest from nine till five,  
 For I am busy then,  
 As well as breakfast, lunch and tea,  
 For they are hungry men.  
 But different folk have different views ;  
 I know a person small—

She keeps ten million serving-men,  
 Who get no rest at all !

She sends 'em abroad on her own affairs,  
 From the second she opens her eyes—  
 One million Hows, two million Wheres,  
 And seven million Whys !

GEORGE WILLIAM RUSSELL ('A. E.')

CCXCV

*RECONCILIATION*

By the hand of a child I am led to the throne  
 of the King  
 For a touch that now fevers me not is for-  
 gotten and far,  
 And His infinite sceptred hands that sway us  
 can bring  
 Me in dreams from the laugh of a child to the  
 song of a star.  
 On the laugh of a child I am borne to the joy  
 of the King.

## LAURENCE BINYON

CCXCVI

*LITTLE HANDS*

Soft little hands that stray and clutch,  
 Like fern-fronds curl and uncurl bold,  
 While baby faces lie in such  
 Close sleep as flowers at night that fold,  
 What is it you would clasp and hold,  
 Wandering outstretched with wilful touch ?  
 O fingers small of shell-tipped rose,  
 How should you know you hold so much ?  
 Two full hearts beating you enclose—  
 Hopes, fears, prayers, longings, joys and woes—  
 All yours to hold, O little hands !  
 More, more than wisdom understands  
 And love, love only, knows.

CCXCVII

*THE LITTLE DANCERS : A LONDON VISION*

Lonely, save for a few faint stars, the sky  
 Dreams ; and lonely, below, the little street  
 Into its gloom retires, secluded and shy.  
 Scarcely the dumb roar enters this soft retreat ;  
 And all is dark, save where come flooding rays  
 From a tavern window : there, to the brisk  
     measure  
 Of an organ that down in an alley merrily  
     plays.  
 Two children, all alone and no one by,  
 Holding their tatter'd frocks, through an airy  
     maze  
 Of motion, lightly threaded with nimble feet,  
 Dance sedately : face to face they gaze,  
 Their eyes shining, grave with a perfect pleasure.

## HILAIRE BELLOC

CCXCVIII

*DEDICATION ON THE GIFT OF A  
BOOK TO A CHILD*

Child ! do not throw this book about !  
 Refrain from the unholy pleasure  
 Of cutting all the pictures out !  
 Preserve it as your chiefest treasure.

Child, have you never heard it said  
 That you are heir to all the ages ?  
 Why, then, your hands were never made  
 To tear these beautiful thick pages !

Your little hands were made to take  
 The better things and leave the worse ones :  
 They also may be used to shake  
 The Massive Paws of Elder Persons.

And when your prayers complete the day,  
 Darling, your little tiny hands  
 Were also made, I think, to pray  
 For men that lose their fairylands.

## FORD MADOX HUEFFER

CCXCIX

*TO CHRISTINA AT NIGHTFALL*

Little thing, ah, little mouse,  
 Creeping through the twilit house,  
 To watch within the shadow of my chair  
 With large blue eyes ; the firelight on your hair  
 Doth glimmer gold and faint,  
 And on your woollen gown  
 That folds adown  
 From steadfast little face to square-set feet.

Ah, sweet ! ah, little one ! so like a carven saint,  
 With your unflinching eyes, unflinching face,  
 Like a small angel, carved in a high place,  
 Watching unmoved across a gabled town ;  
 When I am weak and old,  
 And lose my grip, and crave my small reward  
 Of tolerance and tenderness and ruth,  
 The children of your dawning day shall hold  
 The reins we drop and wield the judge's sword,  
 And your swift feet shall tread upon my heels,  
 And I be Ancient Error, you New Truth,  
 And I be crushed by your advancing wheels . . .

Good-night ! The fire is burning low,  
 Put out the lamp ;  
 Lay down the weary little head  
 Upon the small white bed.  
 Up from the sea the night winds blow  
 Across the hill across the marsh ;  
 Chill and harsh, harsh and damp,  
 The night winds blow.

But, while the slow hours go,  
 I, who must fall before you, late shall wait and keep  
 Watch and ward,  
 Vigil and guard,  
 Where you sleep.

Ah, sweet ! do you the like where I lie dead.

### WALTER DE LA MARE

ccc

### THE FUNERAL

They dressed us up in black,  
 Susan and Tom and me ;  
 And, walking through the fields  
 All beautiful to see,  
 With branches high in the air  
 And daisy and buttercup,  
 We heard the lark in the clouds,—  
 In black dressed up.

They took us to the graves,  
 Susan and Tom and me,  
 Where the long grasses grow  
 And the funeral tree :  
 We stood and watched ; and the wind  
 Came softly out of the sky  
 And blew in Susan's hair,  
 As I stood close by.

Back through the fields we came,  
 Tom and Susan and me,  
 And we sat in the nursery together,  
 And had our tea.  
 And, looking out of the window,  
 I heard the thrushes sing ;  
 But Tom fell asleep in his chair.  
 He was so tired, poor thing.

## CCCI

*ENVoy*

Child, do you love the flower  
 Ashine with colour and dew  
 Lighting its transient hour ?  
 So I love you.

The lambs in the mead are at play,  
 'Neath a hurdle the shepherd's asleep,  
 From height to height of the day  
 The sunbeams sweep.

Evening will come. And alone  
 The dreamer the dark will beguile ;  
 All the world will be gone  
 For a dream's brief while.

Then I shall be old ; and away :  
 And you, with sad joy in your eyes,  
 Will brood over children at play  
 With as loveful surmise.

GILBERT KEITH CHESTERTON

CCCII

*THE SONG OF THE CHILDREN*

The World is ours till sunset,  
Holly and fire and snow ;  
And the name of our dead brother  
Who loved us long ago.

The grown folk mighty and cunning,  
They write his name in gold ;  
But we can tell a little  
Of the million tales he told.

He taught them laws and watchwords,  
To preach and struggle and pray ;  
But he taught us deep in the hayfield  
The games that the angels play.

Had he stayed here for ever,  
Their world would be wise as ours—  
And the king be cutting capers,  
And the priest be picking flowers.

But the dark day came : they gathered :  
On their faces we could see  
They had taken and slain our brother  
And hanged him on a tree.

LADY GLENCONNER

CCCIII

*THE MOTHER*

The budding branches spread their leaves  
To catch the gently breathing air,  
The Mother's heart recounts her sheaves,  
Her harvest-sheaves of love and care,  
Her nine months' joy of happy life,  
Of quiet dreams and blessed days,  
Of peace that even calmed the Strife,  
And steeped her in a golden haze,

—A nimbus—of out-shed delight  
 Whose source so deeply in her lies,  
 As to give stature to her height,  
 And visions that outshine her eyes.

*O heart, that desolation knows,*  
*O couch, where hooded sorrows sit,*  
*O Mother's milk, that idly flows,*  
*And no soft lips to gather it.*

She rises with the rising Sun,  
 Her bare feet brush the glittering dew,  
 She hears the crystal waters run,  
 The throstle with his note so true ;  
 She sees the gentle listening hare,  
 Come limping through the tangled grass,  
 The kine, too indolent to stare,  
 Or lift their heads to see her pass ;  
 She sees the sunlight on the Ridge,  
 She hears the swerving plover's cry,  
 The water weeds above the bridge,  
 The soft clouds sailing in the sky—  
 Are each and all within her sight,  
 A joy too poignant to be borne,  
 She lifts both hands towards the light,  
 That floods the fields of springing corn.  
 Her thoughts rise with the mist's pale wreath,  
 She watches sedge and osier grow,  
 And murmurs, with exalted breath,  
 '*All this—all this—my Babe shall know.*'

'*Hush,'* the wind to the flowers is singing,  
 '*Hush,'* it sings to the clovers deep,  
 '*Hush, hush,'* to the tall grass swinging,  
 '*Fall asleep.'*

The days sweep by on burnished wing,  
 The thrushes herald in the morn,  
 The Mother's heart awakes to sing,  
 '*Soon—soon—my Baby will be born.*'  
 Her joys of hope are manifold,  
 No pen may write, no tongue may speak—

'O patient love, soon—soon I'll hold  
 The little hand against my cheek. . . .'  
 What are the winds in the Ilex crying ?  
 'Fruitless labour and garnered dearth. . . .  
 Why should the little form be lying  
 Under the earth ?'

'Hush—hush'—the scythes are saying,  
 'Hush and heed not, all things pass.'  
 'Hush—hush'—the scythes are swaying  
 Over the grass.

SAROJINI NAIDU

CCCIV

*THE QUEEN'S RIVAL*

I

Queen Gulnaar sat on her ivory bed,  
 Around her countless treasures were spread ;  
 Her chamber walls were richly inlaid  
 With agate, porphyry, onyx and jade ;  
 The tissues that veiled her delicate breast  
 Glowed with the hues of a lapwing's crest ;  
 But still she gazed in her mirror and sighed :  
 'O King, my heart is unsatisfied.'  
 King Feroz bent from his ebony seat :  
 'Is thy least desire unfulfilled, O Sweet ?  
 'Let thy mouth speak and my life be spent  
 To clear the sky of thy discontent.'  
 'I tire of my beauty, I tire of this  
 Empty splendour and shadowless bliss ;  
 'With none to envy and none gainsay,  
 No savour or salt hath my dream or day.'  
 Queen Gulnaar sighed like a murmuring rose :  
 'Give me a rival, O King Feroz.'

## II

King Feroz spoke to his Chief Vizier :  
 ‘ Lo ! ere to-morrow’s dawn be here,  
 ‘ Send forth my messengers over the sea,  
 To seek seven beautiful brides for me ;  
 ‘ Radiant of feature and regal of mien,  
 Seven handmaids meet for the Persian Queen.’  
 Seven new moon tides at the Vesper call,  
 King Feroz led to Queen Gulnaar’s hall  
 A young queen eyed like the morning star :  
 ‘ I bring thee a rival, O Queen Gulnaar.’  
 But still she gazed in her mirror and sighed :  
 ‘ O King, my heart is unsatisfied.’  
 Seven queens shone round her ivory bed,  
 Like seven soft gems on a silken thread,  
 Like seven fair lamps in a royal tower,  
 Like seven bright petals of Beauty’s flower.  
 Queen Gulnaar sighed like a murmuring rose :  
 ‘ Where is my rival, O King Feroz ? ’

## III

When spring winds wakened the mountain flood’s,  
 And kindled the flame of the tulip buds,  
 When bees grew loud and the days grew long,  
 And the peach groves thrilled to the oriole’s song,  
 Queen Gulnaar sat on her ivory bed,  
 Decking with jewels her exquisite head ;  
 And still she gazed in her mirror and sighed :  
 ‘ O King, my heart is unsatisfied.’  
 Queen Gulnaar’s daughter two springtimes old,  
 In blue robes bordered with tassels of gold,  
 Ran to her knee like a wildwood fay,  
 And plucked from her hand the mirror away.

Quickly she set on her own light curls  
 Her mother's fillet with fringes of pearls ;  
 Quickly she turned with a child's caprice  
 And pressed on the mirror a swift, glad kiss.  
 Queen Gulnaar laughed like a tremulous rose :  
 'Here is my rival, O King Feroz.'

## GEOFFREY WINTHROP YOUNG

cccv

- JENNY

There are some children in the field at play,  
 Laughing delightfully ;  
 I cannot hear a word of what they say :  
 Just a clean noise of youth, filling the ear  
 And brimming over on the heart, wind-clear.

The hedge is launching buds of April green  
 On a blue river of sky,  
 Nothing to all the wonders we have seen  
 That held the glance and thought ; but this  
 leaps through  
 Straight from the eye to the heart, with a cry—  
 'I am true.'

That chaffinch singing on a restless tree  
 Somewhere behind the thorn,  
 Is far more real to me  
 Than all the world's old wisdom I have read  
 And all the wise things wiser folk have said. . .

The children have stopped playing : three or four  
 Are scampering home this way  
 Behind the hedge. Just what they seem, no  
 more ;  
 Flicker of brown feet, to the finch's song,  
 In the green May-light when the days grow long.

Yet how much more they mean than what they  
are !

Childhood, and song, and spring,  
Innocent messengers, they bring from far  
Feelings more real than nature's counterpart,  
Childhood, and song, and springtide to the heart.

Suppose I were to call to that wee mite,  
Whose hat like a stray wing  
Streams from one cherub shoulder in her flight  
Along the ditch—' Heart, what do they call  
you ? '

Perhaps she'd answer ' Jenny,' and smile too.

But the brown lifted lashes would disclose  
Worlds of another name,  
The truth, that makes the beauty of the rose,  
Trust, that accepts known and unknown as  
friend,  
Light, that immortal love alone could lend. . . .

Jenny will grow up complex ; be called Jane :  
Truth must find other ways.

Ah well ! the finch will surely sing again :  
Who knows ? perhaps, out of her little meinie  
To some one Jenny may be always ' Jenny.'

### WILFRID WILSON GIBSON

cccvI

#### THE SHOP

Tin-tinkle-tinkle-tinkle, went the bell,  
As I pushed in ; and, once again, the smell  
Of groceries, and news-sheets freshly-printed,  
That always greeted me when I looked in  
To buy my evening paper : but, to-night,  
I wondered not to see the well-known face,  
With kind, brown eyes, and ever-friendly smile  
Behind the counter ; and to find the place  
Deserted at this hour, and not a light  
In either window. Waiting there a while,

Though wondering at what change these changes  
hinted,

I yet was grateful for the quiet gloom—  
Lit only by a gleam from the back-room,  
And, here and there, a glint of glass and tin—  
So pleasant, after all the flare and din  
And hubbub of the foundry : and my eyes,  
Still tingling from the smoke, were glad to rest  
Upon the ordered shelves, so neatly dressed  
That, even in the dusk, they seemed to tell  
No little of the hand that kept them clean,  
And of the head that sorted things so well  
That naught of waste or worry could be seen,  
And kept all sweet with ever-fresh supplies.  
And as I thought upon her quiet way,  
Wondering what could have got her, that she'd  
left

The shop, unlit, untended, and bereft  
Of her kind presence, overhead I heard  
A tiptoe creak, as though somebody stirred,  
With careful step, across the upper floor :  
Then all was silent, till the back-room door  
Swung open ; and her husband hurried in.  
He feared he'd kept me, waiting in the dark ;  
And he was sorry : but his wife who served  
The customers at night-time usually—  
While he made up the ledger after tea,  
Was busy, when I . . . Well, to tell the truth,  
They were in trouble, for their little son  
Had come in ill from school . . . the doctor said  
Pneumonia . . . they'd been putting him to bed :  
Perhaps I'd heard them, moving overhead,  
For boards would creak, and creak, for all your  
care.

They hoped the best ; for he was young ; and  
youth  
Could come through much ; and all that could  
be done  
Would be . . . then he stood, listening, quite  
unnerved,  
As though he heard a footstep on the stair,

Though I heard nothing : but at my remark  
 About the fog and sleet, he turned,  
 And answered quickly, as there burned  
 In his brown eyes an eager flame :  
 The raw and damp were much to blame :  
 If but his son might breathe West-country air !  
 A certain Cornish village he could name  
 Was just the place ; if they could send him  
 there,  
 And only for a week, he'd come back stronger . . .  
 And then, again, he listened : and I took  
 My paper, and went, afraid to keep him longer ;  
 And left him standing with that haggard look.

Next night, as I pushed in, there was no tinkle :  
 And, glancing up, I saw the bell was gone ;  
 Although, in either window, the gas shone ;  
 And I was greeted by a cheery twinkle  
 Of burnished tins and bottles from the shelves :  
 And now, I saw the father busy there  
 Behind the counter, cutting with a string  
 A bar of soap up for a customer,  
 With weary eyes, and jerky, harassed air,  
 As if his mind were hardly on the task :  
 And when 'twas done, and parcelled up for  
 her,  
 And she had gone, he turned to me, and said :  
 He thought that folks might cut their soap them-  
 selves . . .  
 'Twas nothing much . . . but any little thing,  
 At such a time . . . And, having little doubt  
 The boy was worse, I did not like to ask ;  
 So picked my paper up, and hurried out.

And, all next day, amid the glare and clang  
 And clatter of the workshop, his words rang ;  
 And kept on ringing, in my head a-ring ;  
 But any little thing . . . at such a time . . .  
 And kept on chiming to the anvils' chime :  
 But any little thing . . . at such a time . . .  
 And they were hissed and sputtered in the sizzle  
 Of water on hot iron : little thing . . .

At such a time : and, when I left, at last,  
The smoke and steam ; and walked through  
the cold drizzle,  
The lumbering of the 'buses as they passed  
Seemed full of it ; and to the passing feet,  
The words kept patter, patter, with dull beat.

I almost feared to turn into their street,  
Lest I should find the blinds down in the shop :  
And, more than once, I'd half-a-mind to stop,  
And buy my paper from the yelling boys,  
Who darted all about with such a noise  
That I half-wondered, in a foolish way,  
How they could shriek so, knowing that the  
sound

Must worry children, lying ill in bed . . .  
Then, thinking even they must earn their bread,  
As I earned mine, and scarce as noisily !  
I wandered on ; and very soon I found  
I'd followed where my thoughts had been all day,  
And stood before the shop, relieved to see  
The gases burning, and no window-blind  
Of blank foreboding. With an easier mind,  
I entered slowly ; and was glad to find  
The father by the counter, 'waiting me,  
With paper ready and a cheery face.  
Yes ! yes ! the boy was better . . . took the turn,  
Last night, just after I had left the place.  
He feared that he'd been short and cross last  
night . . .

But, when a little child was suffering,  
It worried you . . . and any little thing,  
At such a moment made you cut up rough :  
Though, now that he was going on all right .  
Well, he'd have patience, now, to be polite !  
And, soon as ever he was well enough,  
The boy should go to Cornwall for a change—  
Should go to his own home ; for he, himself,  
Was Cornish, born and bred, his wife as well :  
And still his parents lived in the old place—  
A little place, as snug as snug could be . . .

Where apple-blossom dipped into the sea . . .  
Perhaps, to strangers' ears, that sounded  
strange—

But not to any Cornishman who knew  
How sea and land ran up into each other ;  
And how, all round each wide, blue estuary,  
The flowers were blooming to the waters' edge :  
You'd come on blue-bells like a sea of blue . . .  
But they would not be out for some while yet . . .  
'Twould be primroses, blowing everywhere,  
Primroses, and primroses, and primroses . . .  
You'd never half-know what primroses were,  
Unless you'd seen them growing in the West ,  
But, having seen, would never more forget.  
Why, every bank and every lane and hedge  
Was just one blaze of yellow ; and the smell,  
When the sun shone upon them, after wet . . .  
And his eyes sparkled, as he turned to sell  
A penny loaf and half-an-ounce of tea  
To a poor child, who waited patiently,  
With hacking cough that tore her hollow chest :  
And, as she went out, clutching tight the change,  
He muttered to himself : It's strange, it's  
strange

That little ones should suffer so . . . The light  
Had left his eyes : but when he turned to me,  
I saw a flame leap in them, hot and bright.  
I'd like to take them all,' he said, to-night !

And, in the workshop, all through the next  
day,

The anvils had another tune to play . . .  
Primroses, and primroses, and primroses :  
The bellows puffing out : It's strange, it's  
strange

That little ones should suffer so . . .

And now, my hammer, at a blow :

I'd like to take them all, to-night !

And in the clouds of steam and white-hot glow  
I seemed to see primroses everywhere,  
Primroses, and primroses, and primroses.

And each night after that I heard the boy  
Was mending quickly ; and would soon be well  
Till one night I was startled by the bell—  
Tin-tinkle-tinkle-tinkle, loud and clear ;  
And tried to hush it, lest the lad should hear.  
But, when the father saw me clutch the thing,  
He said the boy had missed it yesterday ;  
And wondered why he could not hear it ring ;  
And wanted it ; and had to have his way.  
And then, with brown eyes burning with deep joy,  
Told me his son was going to the West—  
Was going home . . . the doctor thought, next week,  
He'd be quite well enough : the way was long ;  
But trains were quick ; and he would soon be  
there :

And on the journey he'd have every care,  
His mother being with him . . . it was best,  
That she should go : for he would find it strange,  
The little chap, at first . . . she needed change . . .  
And, when they'd had a whiff of Western air !  
'Twould cost a deal ; and there was naught to  
spare :

But, what was money, if you hadn't health :  
And, what more could you buy, if you'd the  
wealth . . .

Yes ! 'twould be lonely for himself, and rough ;  
Though, on the whole, he'd manage well enough :  
He'd have a lot to do : and there was naught  
Like work to keep folk cheerful : when the hand  
Was busy, you had little time for thought ;  
And thinking was the mischief . . . and 'twas grand  
To know that they'd be happy. Then the bell  
Went tinkle-tinkle ; and he turned to sell.

One night he greeted me with face that shone,  
Although the eyes were wistful ; they were gone—  
Had gone this morning, he was glad to say :  
And, though 'twas sore work, setting them away,  
Still, 'twas the best for them . . . and they  
would be  
Already in the cottage by the sea . . .

He spoke no more of them ; but turned his head ;  
And said he wondered if the price of bread . . .  
And, as I went again into the night,  
I saw his eyes were glistening in the light.

And, two nights after that, he'd got a letter :  
And all was well : the boy was keeping better ;  
And was as happy as a child could be,  
All day with the primroses and the sea,  
And pigs ! Of all the wonders of the West,  
His mother wrote, he liked the pigs the best.  
And now the father laughed until the tears  
Were in his eyes, and chuckled : Ay ! he knew !  
Had he not been a boy there once, himself ?  
He'd liked pigs, too, when he was his son's years.  
And then, he reached a half-loaf from the shelf ;  
And twisted up a farthing's worth of tea,  
And farthing's worth of sugar, for the child,  
The same poor child who waited patiently,  
Still shaken by a hacking, racking cough.

And all next day the anvils rang with jigs :  
The bellows roared and rumbled with loud  
laughter,  
Until it seemed the workshop had gone wild,  
And it would echo, echo, ever after  
The tune the hammers tinkled on and off,  
A silly tune of primroses and pigs . . .  
Of all the wonders of the West  
He liked the pigs, he liked the pigs the best !

Next night, as I went in, I caught  
A strange, fresh smell. The postman had just  
brought  
A precious box from Cornwall, and the shop  
Was lit with primroses, that lay atop  
A Cornish pastry, and a pot of cream :  
And as, with gentle hands, the father lifted  
The flowers his little son had plucked for him,  
He stood a moment in a far-off dream,  
As though in glad remembrances he drifted  
On Western seas : and, as his eyes grew dim,

He stooped, and buried them in deep, sweet bloom :

Till, hearing once again the poor child's cough,  
He served her hurriedly and sent her off,  
Quite happily, with thin hands filled with flowers.

And as I followed to the street, the gloom  
Was starred with primroses ; and many hours  
The strange, shy flickering surprise  
Of that child's keen, enchanted eyes  
Lit up my heart, and brightened my dull room.

Then, many nights the foundry kept me late  
With overtime ; and I was much too tired  
To go round by the shop ; but made for bed  
As straight as I could go : until one night  
We'd left off earlier, though 'twas after eight,  
I thought I'd like some news about the boy.  
I found the shop untended ; and the bell  
Tin-tinkle-tinkle-tinkled all in vain.

And then I saw, through the half-curtained pane,  
The back-room was a very blaze of joy :  
And knew the mother and son had come safe  
back.

And as I slipped away, now all was well,  
I heard the boy shriek out, in shrill delight :  
' And, father, all the little pigs were black ! '

ALFRED NOYES

CCCVII

*SLUMBER-SONGS OF THE MADONNA*

PRELUDE

Dante saw the great white Rose  
    Half unclose ;  
Dante saw the golden bees  
    Gathering from its heart of gold  
        Sweets untold,  
Love's most honeyed harmonies.

Dante saw the threefold bow  
     Strangely glow,  
 Saw the Rainbow Vision rise,  
     And the Flame that wore the crown  
         Bending down  
 O'er the flowers of Paradise.

Something yet remained, it seems ;  
     In his dreams  
 Dante missed—as angels may  
     In their white and burning bliss—  
         Some small kiss  
 Mortals meet with every day.

Italy in splendour faints  
     'Neath her saints !  
 O, her great Madonnas, too,  
     Faces calm as any moon  
         Glows in June,  
 Hooded with the night's deep blue !

What remains ? I pass and hear  
     Everywhere,  
 Ay, or see in silent eyes  
     Just the song she still would sing  
         Thus—a-swing  
 O'er the cradle where He lies.

## I

Sleep, little baby, I love thee ;  
 Sleep, little king, I am bending above thee !  
     How should I know what to sing  
 Here in my arms as I swing thee to sleep ?  
         Hushaby low,  
         Rockaby so,  
 Kings may have wonderful jewels to bring,  
 Mother has only a kiss for her king !  
 Why should my singing so make me to weep ?  
 Only I know that I love thee, I love thee,  
     Love thee, my little one, sleep.

## II

Is it a dream ? Ah yet, it seems  
Not the same as other dreams !  
I can but think that angels sang,  
When thou wast born, in the starry sky,  
And that their golden harps out-rang  
While the silver clouds went by !

The morning sun shuts out the stars,  
Which are much loftier than the sun ;  
But, could we burst our prison-bars  
And find the Light whence light begun,  
The dreams that heralded thy birth  
Were truer than the truths of earth ;  
And, by that far immortal Gleam  
Soul of my soul, I still would dream ! . . .

A ring of light was round thy head,  
The great-eyed oxen nigh thy bed  
Their cold and innocent noses bowed !  
Their sweet breath rose like an incense cloud  
In the blurred and mystic lanthorn light.  
About the middle of the night  
The black door blazed like some great star  
With a glory from afar,  
Or like some mighty chrysolite  
Wherein an angel stood with white  
Blinding arrowy bladed wings  
Before the throne of the King of kings ;  
And, through it, I could dimly see  
A great steed tethered to a tree.

Then, with crimson gems aflame  
Through the door the three kings came,  
And the black Ethiop unrolled  
The richly broidered cloth of gold,  
And pourèd forth before thee there  
Gold and frankincense and myrrh !

## III

See, what a wonderful smile ! Does it mean  
 That my little one knows of my love ?  
 Was it meant for an angel that passed unseen,  
 And smiled at us both from above ?  
 Does it mean that he knows of the birds and  
 the flowers  
 That are waiting to sweeten his childhood's  
 hours,  
 And the tales I shall tell and the games he will  
 play,  
 And the songs we shall sing and the prayers we  
 shall pray  
 In his boyhood's May,  
 He and I, one day ?

## IV

For in the warm blue summer weather  
 We shall laugh and love together :  
 I shall watch my baby growing,  
 I shall guide his feet,  
 When the orange trees are blowing  
 And the winds are heavy and sweet !  
 When the orange orchards whiten  
 I shall see his great eyes brighten  
 To watch the long-legged camels going  
 Up the twisted street,  
 When the orange trees are blowing  
 And the winds are sweet.  
*What does it mean ? Indeed, it seems  
 A dream ! Yet not like other dreams !*  
 We shall walk in pleasant vales,  
 Listening to the shepherd's song :  
 I shall tell him lovely tales  
 All day long :  
 He shall laugh while mother sings  
 Tales of fishermen and kings.  
 He shall see them come and go  
 O'er the wistful sea,

Where rosy oleanders blow  
 Round blue Lake Galilee,  
 Kings with fishers' ragged coats  
 And silver nets across their boats,  
 Dipping through the starry glow,  
 With crowns for him and me !

Ah, no ;  
 Crowns for him, not me !  
*Rockaby so ! Indeed, it seems  
 A dream ! Yet not like other dreams !*

## V

Ah, see what a wonderful smile again !  
 Shall I hide it away in my heart,  
 To remember one day in a world of pain  
 When the years have torn us apart,  
 Little babe,  
 When the years have torn us apart ?  
 Sleep, my little one, sleep,  
 Child with the wonderful eyes,  
 Wild miraculous eyes,  
 Deep as the skies are deep !  
 What star-bright glory of tears  
 Waits in you now for the years  
 That shall bid you waken and weep ?  
 Ah, in that day, could I kiss you to sleep  
 Then, little lips, little eyes,  
 Little lips that are lovely and wise,  
 Little lips that are dreadful and wise !

## VI

Clenched little hands like crumpled roses  
 Dimpled and dear,  
 Feet like flowers that the dawn uncloses,  
 What do I fear ?  
 Little hands, will you ever be clenched in  
 anguish ?  
 White little limbs, will you droop and languish ?  
 Nay, what do I hear ?

## V

I hear a shouting far away,  
 You shall ride on a kingly palm-strewn way  
 Some day !

But when you are crowned with a golden crown  
 And throned on a golden throne,  
 You'll forget the manger of Bethlehem town  
 And your mother that sits alone  
 Wondering whether the mighty king  
 Remembers a song she used to sing,  
 Long ago,  
 'Rockaby so,  
*Kings may have wonderful jewels to bring,  
 Mother has only a kiss for her king !' . . .*

Ah, see what a wonderful smile, once more !  
 He opens his great dark eyes !  
 Little child, little king, nay, hush, it is o'er  
 My fear of those deep twin skies,—  
 Little child,  
 You are all too dreamful and wise !

## VII

But now you are mine, all mine,  
 And your feet can lie in my hand so small,  
 And your tiny hands in my heart can twine,  
 And you cannot walk, so you never shall fall,  
 Or be pierced by the thorns beside the door,  
 Or the nails that lie upon Joseph's floor ;  
 Through sun and rain, through shadow and shine  
 You are mine, all mine !

## CCCVIII

*THE DREAM-CHILD'S INVITATION*

*Once upon a time !—Ah, now the light is burning  
 dimly,*  
 Peterkin is here again : he wants another tale !  
 Don't you hear him whispering—*The wind is in  
 the chimley,*  
*The ottoman's a treasure-ship, we'll all set sail ?*

All set sail? No, the wind is very loud to-night:  
The darkness on the waters is much deeper  
than of yore,  
Yet I wonder—hark, he whispers—if the little  
streets are still as bright  
In old Japan, in old Japan, that happy  
haunted shore.

I wonder—hush, he whispers—if perhaps the  
world will wake again  
When Christmas brings the stories back from  
where the skies are blue,  
Where clouds are scattering diamonds down on  
every cottage window-pane,  
And every boy's a fairy prince, and every tale  
is true.

There the sword Excalibur is thrust into the  
dragon's throat,  
Evil there is evil, black is black, and white is  
white :  
There the child triumphant hurls the villain  
spluttering into the moat ;  
There the captured princess only waits the  
peerless knight.

Fairyland is gleaming there beyond the Sherwood  
Forest trees,  
There the City of the Clouds has anchored on  
the plain  
All her misty vistas and slumber-rosy palaces  
(*Shall we not, ah, shall we not, wander there  
again?*)

' Happy ever after ' there, the lights of home a  
welcome fling  
Softly thro' the darkness as the star that  
shone of old,  
Softly over Bethlehem and o'er the little cradled  
King  
Whom the sages worshipped with their frank-  
incense and gold.

*Once upon a time*—perhaps a hundred thousand years ago—

Whisper to me, Peterkin, I have forgotten when !

Once upon a time there was a way, a way we used to know

For stealing off at twilight from the weary ways of men.

Whisper it, O whisper it—the way, the way is all I need !

All the heart and will are here and all the deep desire !

*Once upon a time*—ah, now the light is drawing near indeed,

I see the fairy faces flush to roses round the fire.

*Once upon a time*—the little lips are on my cheek again,

Little fairy fingers clasped and clinging draw me nigh,

Dreams, no more than dreams, but they unloose the weary prisoner's chain

And lead him from his dungeon ! ' What's a thousand years ? ' they cry.

A thousand years, a thousand years, a little drifting dream ago,

All of us were hunting with a band of merry men,

The skies were blue, the boughs were green, the clouds were crisping isles of snow . . .

. . . So Robin blew his bugle, and the Now became the Then.

## SHANE LESLIE

cccix

*FLEET STREET*

I never see the newsboys run  
 Amid the whirling street,  
 With swift untiring feet,  
 To cry the latest venture done,  
 But I expect one day to hear  
 Them cry the crack of doom  
 And risings from the tomb,  
 With great Archangel Michael near ;  
 And see them running from the Fleet  
 As messengers of God,  
 With Heaven's tidings shod  
 About their brave unwearied feet.

## RICHARD MIDDLETON

cccx

*ON A DEAD CHILD*

Man proposes, God in His time disposes,  
 And so I wander'd up to where you lay,  
 A little rose among the little roses,  
 And no more dead than they.

It seem'd your childish feet were tired of straying,  
 You did not greet me from your flower-strewn bed,  
 Yet still I knew that you were only playing—  
 Playing at being dead.

I might have thought that you were really  
 sleeping,  
 So quiet lay your eyelids to the sky,  
 So still your hair, but surely you were peeping ;  
 And so I did not cry.

God knows, and in His proper time disposes,  
 And so I smiled and gently called your name,  
 Added my rose to your sweet heap of roses,  
 And left you to your game.

## JOHN MASEFIELD

cccxi

*'IN AS MUCH AS YE HAVE DONE IT'*

He who gives a child a treat  
 Makes joy-bells ring in Heaven's street,  
 And he who gives a child a home  
 Builds palaces in Kingdom Come,  
 And she who gives a baby birth  
 Brings Saviour Christ again to earth ;  
 For life is joy, and mind is fruit,  
 And body's precious earth and root.

## CICELY FOX SMITH

cccxii

*A WORSHIPPER*

Against the oaken pew he leant,  
 A child of summers three or four,  
 And smiled to see each stained-glass saint  
 Cast by the sunshine on the floor.

He wondered why the folk should look  
 So sad and stern on either hand.  
 His thoughts were wandering from the book,  
 The prayers he could not understand.

Yet, when the organ's thunder filled  
 The dim-lit aisles in praise and prayer,  
 Sweetly his baby treble trilled  
 Happiest of all who worshipped there.

The sunshine made his heart rejoice ;  
 And who shall chide him ? Who declare  
 God did not hear the childish voice  
 That sang because His world was fair ?

## SIDNEY ROYSE LYSAGHT

cccxiii

*FIRST PATHWAYS*

Where were the pathways that your childhood  
knew ?—

In mountain glens ? or by the ocean strands ?  
Or where, beyond the ripening harvest lands,  
The distant hills were blue ?

Where evening sunlight threw a golden haze  
Over a mellow city's walls and towers ?  
Or where the fields and lanes were bright  
with flowers,  
In quiet woodland ways ?

And whether here or there, or east or west,  
That place you dwelt in first was holy ground ;  
Its shelter was the kindest you have found,  
Its pathways were the best.

And even in the city's smoke and mire  
I doubt not that a golden light was shed  
On those first paths, and that they also led  
To lands of heart's desire.

And where the children in dark alleys penn'd  
Heard the caged lark sing of the April hills,  
Or where they damm'd the muddy gutter rills,  
Or made a dog their friend ;

Or where they gathered, dancing hand in hand,  
About the organ man, for them, too, lay  
Beyond the dismal alley's entrance way  
The gates of wonderland.

For 'tis my faith that Earth's first words are  
sweet  
To all her children,—never a rebuff ;  
And that we only saw, where ways were rough  
The flowers about our feet.

## WILLIAM HENRY DAVIES.

cccxiv

*ECHO*

O happy days of childhood, when  
We taught shy Echo in the glen  
Words she had never used before—  
Ere age lost heart to summon her.  
Life's river, with its early rush,  
Falls into a mysterious hush  
When nearing the eternal sea :  
Yet we would not forgetful be,  
In these deep silent days so wise,  
Of shallows making mighty noise,  
When we were young, when we were gay,  
And never thought Death lived—that day.

cccxv

*THE DREAMING BOY*

Sweet are thy dreams, thou happy, careless boy ;  
Thou know'st the taste of immortality ;  
No weary limbs can rest upon thy heart ;  
Sleep has no care to ease thee of at night ;  
The same move shuts together eye and mind,  
And in the morning one move opens both.  
Life lies before thee, hardly stepped on yet,  
Like a green prairie, fresh, and full of flowers.  
Life lies before thee for experiment,  
Until old age comes, whose sad eyes can trace  
A better path he missed, with fairer flowers,  
Which other men have walked in misery.  
Thou hast no knowledge of a life of toil,  
How hard Necessity destroys our dreams,  
And castles in the air must pay him tithes  
So heavy that no tenant keeps them long.  
To thee the world is still unknown and strange  
Still full of wild romance, as in those days  
Ere England launched her forests on the sea.

Thou wilt discover in far mountain caves  
Deserted, lamps left burning for thy feet,  
And comfort in them more than kings are worth.  
Aye, many a gate will open at thy call,  
And wise men will come forth to welcome thee,  
And bells will ring for pleasure in thy ear.  
Great monsters in dark woods, with mighty  
mouths  
That swallow their own faces when they yawn,  
And mountain bears that carry on their backs  
Rough, shaggy coats whose price compares with  
silk—  
Will fall by thy strong, right, all-conquering arm.  
And who can stop thee ; who can turn thee back ?  
Not giants, though they stand full twenty feet,  
And sit too tall for common men to stand.  
Oh, that sweet magic in thee, happy boy !  
It makes a golden world for all things young.  
Thou with an iron ring, a piece of bone,  
A rusty blade, or half a yard of rope,  
Art richer than a man with mines and ships.  
The child's fresh mind makes honey out of soot,  
Sweeter than Age can make on banks of flowers ;  
He needs but cross a bridge, that happy boy,  
And he can breathe the air of a new world.  
Sweet children, with your trust in this hard life—  
Like little birds that ope their mouths for food  
From hands that come to cage them till they die.

## CCCXVI

## THE HAPPY CHILD

I saw this day sweet flowers grow thick—  
But not one like the child did pick.

I heard the packhounds in green park—  
But no dog like the child heard bark.

I heard this day bird after bird—  
But not one like the child has heard.

A hundred butterflies saw I—  
But not one like the child saw fly.

I saw the horses roll in grass—  
But no horse like the child saw pass.

My world this day has lovely been—  
But not like what the child has seen.

JOHN FREEMAN

CCCXVII

*CHILDHOOD CALLS*

Come over, come over the deepening river,  
Come over again the dark torrent of years,  
Come over, come back where the green leaves  
    quiver,  
And the lilac still blooms and the grey sky clears.  
  
Come, come back to the everlasting garden,  
To that green heaven, and the blue heaven above.  
Come back to the time when time brought no  
    burden,  
And love was unconscious, knowing not love.

CCCXVIII

*THE KITE*

It was a day  
All blue and lifting white,  
When I went into the fields with Frank  
To fly his kite.

The fields were aged, bare,  
Shut between houses everywhere.  
All the way there  
The wind tugged at the kite to take it  
Untethered, toss and break it ;  
But Frank held fast, and I  
Walked with him admiringly ;  
In his light brave and fine  
How bright was mine !

We tailed the kite  
While the wind flapped its purple face  
And yellow head.  
Frank's yellow head  
Was scarcely higher, and not so bright.  
' Let go ! ' he cried, and I let go  
And watched the kite  
Swaying and rising so  
That I was rooted to the place,  
Watching the kite  
Rise into the blue,  
Lifting its head against the white,  
Against the sun,  
Against the height  
That far-off, farther drew ;  
Shivering there  
In that fine air  
As we below shivered with delight  
And fear.

There it floated  
Among the birds and clouds at ease  
Of others all unnoted,  
Swimming above the ranked stiff trees.  
And I lay down, looking up at the sky,  
The clouds and birds that floated  
By others still unnoted,  
And that swaying kite  
Specking the light :  
Looking up at the sky,  
The birds and clouds that drew  
Nearer, leaving the blue,  
Stooping, and then brushing me,  
With such tenderness touching me  
That I had still lain there  
In those fields bare,  
Forgetting the kite ;  
For every cloud was now a kite  
Streaming with light.

## PATRICK R. CHALMERS

CCCXIX

## 'TREASURE ISLAND'

A lover breeze to the roses pleaded,  
 Failed and faltered, took heart and advanced ;  
 Up over the peaches, unimpeded,  
 A great Red Admiral ducked and danced ;  
 But the boy with the book saw not, nor heeded,  
 Reading entranced—entranced !

He read, nor knew that the fat bees bumbled ;  
 He woke no whit to the tea-bell's touch,  
 The browny pigeons that wheeled and tumbled  
 (For how should a pirate reck of such ?).  
 He read, and the flaming flower-beds crumbled,  
 At tap of the sea-cook's crutch !

And lo, there leapt for him dolphins running  
 The peacock seas of the buccaneer,  
 Long, savage reefs where the seals lay sunning,  
 The curve of canvas, the creak of gear ;  
 For ever the Master's wondrous cunning  
 Lent him of wizard lear !

But lost are the garden days of leisure,  
 Lost with their wide-eyed ten-year-old,  
 Yet if you'd move to a by-gone measure,  
 Or shape your heart to an ancient mould,  
 Maroons and schooners and buried treasure  
 Wrought on a page of gold—

Then take the book in the dingy binding,  
 Still the shadows come, bearded, great,  
 And swaggering files of sea-thieves winding  
 Back, with their ruffling cut-throat gait,  
 Reclaim an hour when we first went finding  
 Pieces of Eight—of Eight.

MARION ST. JOHN ADCOCK

cccxx

*THE REASON*

When I was naughty an' sent up to bed,  
 And wouldn't go up—I was growing,' I said,  
 Too *big* to be sent—Mother jus' shook her head ;  
 It's cur'ous, she didn't believe that I was,  
 And didn't do like what I thought she would,  
 'cos

She sent me upstairs to bed.

When I was naughty an' sent up to bed,  
 And somehow I cried on the stairway an' said  
 I was only jus' *little*, then Mother, instead,  
 Came suddenly to me with arms open wide ;  
 Her eyes were all shiny ; ' Jus' little,' she cried,  
 An' carried me down from bed.

ROSE FYLEMAN

cccxxi

*MRS BROWN*

As soon as I'm in bed at night  
 And snugly settled down,  
 The little girl I am by day  
 Goes very suddenly away,  
 And then I'm Mrs. Brown.

I have a family of six,  
 And all of them have names,  
 The girls are Joyce and Nancy Maud.  
 The boys are Marmaduke and Claude  
 And Percival and James.

We have a house with twenty rooms  
 A mile away from town ;  
 I think it's good for girls and boys  
 To be allowed to make a noise—  
 And so does Mr Brown.

We do the most exciting things,  
Enough to make you creep ;  
And on and on and on we go—  
I sometimes wonder if I know  
When I have gone to sleep.

HELEN PARRY EDEN

CCCXII

*THE BABY GOAT*

Four alders guard a bridge of planks  
And waveless waters filmed with brown,  
A rugged lawn's uneven banks  
Slope gently down,  
And there, still chafing at the chain  
That girds his slim pathetic throat,  
They've picketed our friend again—  
The Baby Goat.

Treading alone the watered vale,  
Betsey and I, beside the marsh  
Often we linger to bewail  
His durance harsh ;  
What plaints allure my baby's feet,  
What tethered struggles claim her sighs,  
What shrill protestant whinnies greet  
Her long good-byes.

Once we repassed the lonely ground  
Below the alders where he feeds  
And spied his stunted horns girt round  
With flow'ring weeds, .  
Two merry wenches and a child  
Caressed his grey ill-fitting coat  
And, lolling in the sedge, beguiled  
The Baby Goat.

Now, for long days companionless,  
His soft blunt nose, his agate eyes,  
His raised remonstrant brows express  
The sad surprise

Wherewith the desolate green waste  
O'erloads his heart who at the edge  
Of stagnant waters kneels to taste  
The thankless sedge.

His Mother is his chieftest lack  
Who in some heathy upland place  
Tidied his sturdy socks of black  
And licked his face ;  
He turns to see us saunter by  
The level highway hand-in-hand—  
I think the Baby Goat knows why  
We understand.

## CCCXIII

## THE PETALS

Youself in bed  
(My lovely Drowsy-head)  
Your garments lie like petals shed  
Upon the floor  
Whose carpet is strewn o'er  
With little things that late you wore.  
  
For the morrow's wear  
I fold them neat and fair  
And lay them on the nursery chair ;  
  
And round them lie  
Airs of the hours that die  
With all their stored-up fragrancy.  
  
As a flower might  
Give out to the cool night  
The warmth it drank in day-long light,  
So wool and lawn  
From your soft skin withdrawn  
(Whereon they were assumed at dawn)  
  
Breathe the spent mood,  
Lost act and attitude,  
Of the small sweetness they endued.

Ere all turn cold  
 No garment that I hold  
 But shakes a vision from its fold  
 Of little feet  
 That vainly would be fleet,  
 Tangled about with meadow-sweet,  
 And of bent knees  
 When Betsey kneeling sees,  
 In the parched hedgerow, strawberries.  
 Such things I see  
 Folding your clothes, which be  
 Weeds of the dead day's comedy.  
 The while I pray  
 Your part may be alway  
 So simple and so good to play,  
 And do desire  
 Your life may still respire  
 Such sweetness as your cast attire.

## cccxxiv

*THE BELGIAN PINAFORE*

'Twas bought in Bruges, the shop was poor,  
 One read 'Au Bébé' flourished o'er  
 The ancient lintel ; to that door  
 No English guinea  
 Had ever come nor travelled gold  
 Gladdened her gaze, that woman old,  
 Who tottered from the gloom and sold  
 The Belgian 'pinny.'

I mind me choosing in the place  
 A cap with frills of little lace ;  
 'That too,' I said, 'shall come to grace  
 My Small and Sweet.'  
 Prim in her pinafore arrayed  
 I pictured Betsey while I strayed  
 Where, all the time, the proud bells played  
 Above the street.

Now, Betsey, on the roguish back  
 That stalks around the sunny stack  
 The turkey's truculence or the track  
 Of stable cats  
 The Belgian ' pinny ' flaunts its hue,  
 Still the same stripe of white and blue  
 As when 'twas dyed, no doubt for you,  
 In Flemish vats.

Still of its old lost life it tells  
 And alien provenance, there are spells  
 And glamour of the Town of Bells  
 About it shed ;  
 And when my Belgian Betsey climbs  
 My knee I've heard a hundred times  
 The clash and ripple of the chimes  
 Around her head,

As though the child herself did play  
 Without some white estaminet  
 Shuttered and silent where, all day  
 In sun and shower,  
 Two little lions with stone grins  
 Hold 'scutcheons under paws and chins  
 And their divine appellant dins  
 The honoured hour.

## MADELEINE NIGHTINGALE

cccxxv

## DEDICATION

(Of '*Nursery Lays of Nursery Days*' )

For you who can never be lost or dead,  
 Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine,  
 I sing of the old red window-seat,  
 I sing of the friends of the friendly street,  
 I sing of the tramp of their passing feet  
 And the things that the sound of them said.

For, surely, wherever you are to-day,  
 Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine,  
 Though you sail your ship on the crystal sea,  
 Though you ride on the wind's back, wild and  
     free,  
 Though you find the fairies, you'll sometimes be  
 A little bit tired of play.

You'll tire, though you romp in the farthest sky,  
 Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine ;  
 Who should know you and I not know,  
 You who are mine from the long ago,  
 Mine till the rivers shall cease to flow  
 And the ocean of time run dry ?

You'll tire and you'll call me creation through,  
 Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine,  
 From the hills where the lights of Someday gleam,  
 Over the spaces that only seem,  
 And down in the depths of the deepmost dream  
 You'll ask me to sing to you.

And I'll sing, whilst I hold you upon my knee,  
 Baby o' mine, Baby o' mine,  
 Things you'd have heard in the Might Have Been,  
 Things you'd have thought and loved and seen,  
 I've written them out all fair and clean,  
 I'll sing them for you and me.

## FRANCES CHESTERTON

cccxxvi

*TO FELICITY WHO CALLS ME MARY*

You go singing through my garden on little  
     dancing feet,  
 Crying ' Mary, Mary, Mary,' with laughter shrill  
     and sweet ;  
 And the lily bud grows paler and the passion  
     flower flames,  
 As light upon the wandering breeze you toss the  
     name of names.

When I was but a tiny child, they chose for me  
a saint,  
Fulfilled of Christian charity and heavenly  
restraint ;  
But you have called me Mary, and oh ! I joy  
to hear  
The name of God's own Mother come so gaily  
on the air.

What though my arms be empty, and hers for  
ever press  
The Eternal Child who touches you with such  
divine caress,  
Here's another love, Felicity, and oh, sweetheart,  
drink deep,  
That you may laugh more easily, and I forget  
to weep.

For you have called me Mary, making bitter  
waters sweet,  
Oh little soul of happiness, oh little dancing feet ;  
And I grow bold in honour, that all my spirit  
shames,  
As light upon the wandering breeze you toss the  
name of names.

HUGH MACNAGHTEN

cccxxvii

*IDYLL*

In Switzerland one idle day,  
As on the grass at noon we lay,  
Came a grave peasant child and stood  
Watching the strangers eat their food.  
And what we offered her she took  
In silence, with her quiet look,  
And when we rose to go, content  
Without a word of thanks she went.

Another day in sleet and rain  
 I chose the meadow path again,  
 And partly turning chanced to see  
 My little guest-friend watching me  
 With eyes half hidden by her hair,  
 Blowing me kisses, unaware  
 That I had seen, and still she wore  
 The same grave aspect as before.

And some recall for heart's delight  
 A sunrise, some a snowy height,  
 And I a little child who stands  
 And gravely kisses both her hands.

HENRY ALLSOPP

• CCCXXVIII

*THE BLUE OF HEAVEN*

We wandered through the wooded vales  
 A fairy child and I ;  
 And when she asked me where was Heaven,  
 I said, ' In yonder sky.'

' Ah, yes ! the sky is blue,' she said,  
 ' And looks so still and pure ;  
 And see ! this violet is blue  
 It came from heaven for sure.'

I answered, ' Yes, it came from Heaven ' ;  
 And tenderly she knelt  
 To kiss the floweret's lips, that clung  
 To hers as though they felt.

She saw a swallow sweep along,  
 And ' That is blue,' she said,  
 ' And came from Heaven ' ; and wished the bird  
 Had not so swiftly fled.

And then we caught a glimpse through trees  
 Of ocean blue and clear,  
 A part of Heaven—and O, how large !  
 How good that it was near !

' Why, surely there must be,' she said  
   ' As much on earth as *there*.  
 The flower, the bird, the ocean too,  
   Are blue and just as fair.'

I answered, ' Yes,' and hoped for her  
   That Earth had much of Heaven,  
 And blessed the simple faith of this  
   Sweet goldylocks of seven.

A streamlet crept among the ferns  
   ('Twas scarce a step across),  
 And there she bent and softly stroked  
   The creeping, silken moss.

The pool revealed her floweret face :  
   She saw her eyes were blue ;  
 And soon in wistful wonder asked  
   ' My eyes—are *they* Heaven too ? '

She stole to me, and when I said,  
   ' Yes, all things pure and fair,'  
 She took my hand and looked at me  
   Through strays of golden hair.

' And yours are blue,' she softly said,  
   ' So blue ; and I am glad.'  
 But I could only kiss her lips,  
   And hide that I was sad.

JOHN LE GAY BRERETON

CCXXXIX

*INCARNATION*

Our little queen of dreams,  
 Our image of delight,  
 Which whitens east and gleams  
 And beckons from the height,  
 Takes on her human form—is here in mortal sight.

We two have loved her long,  
 Have known her eyes for years ;  
 We worshipped her with song  
 The spirit only hears,  
 And now she comes to us new-washed with blood  
 and tears.

Her radiant self she veils  
 With vesture meet for earth,  
 And, knowing all, inhales  
 The lethal air of birth,  
 And wakes to restless dreams of misery and  
 mirth. . . .

What gift is ours to give,  
 What truth is ours to teach  
 That she may learn to live  
 With joy within her reach ?  
 We can but let her learn the sound of human  
 speech. . . .

Her kinship she will know  
 With beast and rock and tree,  
 Wherever she may go  
 The sky her home will be,  
 The winds will be her mates, her crooning nurse  
 the sea.

## SHAW NEILSON

CCXXX

*THE LAND WHERE I WAS BORN*

Have you ever been down to my countree  
 Where the trees are green and tall ?  
 The days are long and the heavens are high,  
 But the people there are small.  
 There is no work there ; it is always play ;  
 The sun is sweet in the morn ;  
 But a thousand dark things walk at night  
 In the land where I was born.

Have you ever been down to my countree  
Where the birds made happy spring ?  
The parrots screamed from the honey-trees,  
And the jays hopped chattering.  
Strange were the ways of the water-birds  
In the brown swamps, night and morn ;  
I knew the roads they had in the reeds  
In the land where I was born.

Have you ever been down to my countree ?  
Have you ridden the horses there ?  
They had silver manes, and we made them  
prance  
And plunge and gallop and rear.  
We were knights of the olden time,  
When the old chain-mail was worn :  
The swords would flash and the helmets  
crash  
In the land where I was born.

Have you ever been down to my countree ?  
It was full of smiling queens :  
They had flaxen hair, they were white and  
fair,  
But they never reached their teens.  
Their shoes were small and their dreams were  
tall :  
Wonderful frocks were worn ;  
But the queens all strayed from the place we  
played,  
In the land where I was born.

I know you have been to my countree  
Though I never saw you there ;  
I know you have loved all things I have  
loved,  
Flowery, sweet and fair.  
The days were long,—it was always play ;  
But we,—we were tired and worn ;  
They could not welcome us back again  
To the land where I was born.

## SHAKESPEARE

CCCXXXI

## ENVOY

Our revels now are ended. These our actors,  
As I foretold you, were all spirits, and  
Are melted into air, into thin air :  
And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,  
The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve  
And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
As dreams are made on, and our little life  
Is rounded with a sleep.



NOTES  
INDEX OF AUTHORS  
AND  
INDEX OF FIRST LINES



## NOTES

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- 1 1 These lines breathe the very spirit of piety and the perfection of motherhood. Swinburne said of them 'unspeakable in their loveliness they seem to my poor judgment.'
- 2 2 I have found it beyond my powers to modernise the spelling in this tender little poem. It is one of the lyrics in *The Garland of Laurel*, which Skelton wrote for his patroness the Countess of Surrey, mother of Henry Howard the poet, about 1520. *Nepte* is a kind of calamint : *ieloffer* = gillyflower : *enuwd* = enewed : *sterre* = star : *morow* = morning : *make you sure* = assure you.
- 3 3 A contribution of Edwardes' own to *The Paradise of Dainty Devices*, a popular Elizabethan anthology of which he was the collector.
- 4 From the *Shepheard's Calendar*—December.
- 4 5 *Faerie Queene*, I. XII. vii.
- 5 7 Known as *The Coventry Carol*. It is the second of three songs belonging to the Pageant of the Shearmen and Taylors' Company in Coventry, the subject of which was the Birth of Christ and Offering of the Magi, with the Flight into Egypt and Murder of the Innocents. The first and third of the songs, telling of the shining of the Star and the coming of the Herald Angels, were sung by the Shepherds, the second (*Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child*) was sung by the Women, the mothers of the Innocents. Cf. Sharp's *Pageants or Dramatic Mysteries anciently performed at Coventry*. Coventry : MDCCCXXV.
- 6 9 Robert Southwell was trained at Douai and Paris, and entered the Society of Jesus in 1578. He was thirteen times tortured on the rack by the Government of Elizabeth and put to death in 1595. This beautiful and fervent poem—a special favourite of Ben Jonson's—was probably written during his imprisonment.
- 7 10 *Winter's Tale*, i. 2.
- 8 11 *Midsummer Night's Dream*, iii. 2, and *As You Like It*, i. 3.

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- 8 12 *King John*, iii. 4.
- 10 13 *King Richard III*. iv. 3.
- 12 16 The third of the seven sonnets called *La Corona*, each of which (after the first) begins with the last line of the preceding sonnet.
- 17 These lines are the epitaph in Hawsted Church in Suffolk of Dorothy Drury, daughter of Sir Robert Drury and niece of Francis Bacon. They have always been attributed to Donne, who wrote a Funeral Elegy upon her sister Elizabeth Drury, who died aged fifteen.
- 13 18 From *A Pindaric Ode, to the immortal memory and friendship of that noble pair, Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison*. Ben Jonson had unusual sympathy with children. His little known elegy *Eupheme or The Faire Fame, left to posterite of that truly-noble Lady, the Lady Venetia Digby, late wife of Sir Kenelme Digby, Knight : a gentleman absolute in all numbers*, which consists of 'ten pieces,' begins with the dedication of her cradle. I quote two stanzas from it :
- For, though that rattles, timbrels, toyes,  
Take little infants with their noyse,  
As prop'rest gifts to girles and boyes,  
    Of light expense ;  
Their corrals, whistles, and prime coates,  
Their painted maskes, their paper boates,  
With sayles of silke, as the first notes  
    Surprise their sense.
- 14 21 The rich humanity and breadth of outlook which distinguished Richard Corbet, Bishop of Oxford and then of Norwich, are well displayed in this little poem. Another of Corbet's poems is *Farewell rewards and fairies*.
- 15 23 These two sonnets are from a little group of scriptural poems, *Floures of Sion*. Drummond is not the only Elizabethan who owed much to Italian example, but he developed a form of his own out of the technique he inherited ; his technical perfection is second only to that of Shakespeare, Sidney and Spenser, and his calm and spiritual exaltation are his own. If his friend Ben Jonson thought his poems 'smelled too much of the schooles,' to Charles Lamb his name carried 'a perfume in the mention,' and had 'a finer relish' (Lamb confessed) 'than that of Milton or of Shakespeare,' and Palgrave has placed his fine ode *Phoebus, arise !* at the very threshold of the original Golden Treasury.
- 16 24 George Wither fought on both sides during the Civil War, and though he was made a Major-

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- General by Cromwell, he earned by his inconstancy the contempt and reproach of Dryden and lesser partisans of the Restoration. He was 'discovered' by Charles Lamb, and highly praised by Swinburne. Prof. Saintsbury says of him, 'if genuine pastoral sweetness—the sense of the country and of country joys—is anywhere in English poetry, it is in Wither, who has much besides.'
- 20 27 Handsell = New Year's gift, or earnest-money in token of a new beginning. There is a peculiar delicacy in Herrick's child poems, and attention is here drawn to his *Christmas Caroll, sung to the King in the Presence at White-Hall*, which contains the exquisite line  
 The Darling of the World is come.
- 21 29 *Paddocks* = frogs.
- 22 33 *Behither ill, behither* is a preposition, meaning 'short of,' 'barring,' 'save.' The original and earlier use of the word was of space, 'on this side of.'
- 23 34 Daughter of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.
- 24 37 Strode was chaplain to Richard Corbet, Bishop of Oxford—whose lines to his son Vincent appear in this volume. Strode's poems were collected from anthologies and manuscripts, and published by Bertram Dobell in 1907. Little Mistress Mary Prideaux was a daughter of Dr. John Prideaux, Rector of Exeter College, Oxford, and Bishop of Worcester. There is an elegy by William Browne on another daughter, Anne, who died at the age of six.
- 26 38 This exquisitely simple poem was reprinted from Emily Taylor's *Flowers and Fruits from Old English Gardens* in the first edition of Beeching's *Lyra Sacra*, but omitted from the second. It is clearly the work of a scholar. 'Nevermore' was probably one word—as here printed. Protests used to be made against 'evermore' as an Americanism. But some so-called Americanisms are in truth English expressions, which were taken westwards in the seventeenth century.
- 27 39 These touching lines are taken from a brass in the chancel of Reigate Parish Church. The inscription above them is as follows :  
 'Here lyeth interred the body of Anne Worly, the daughter of William Worly, Esq., and of Alice his wife, who departed this life the 3d. day of September Anno 1653 being about the age of 8 yeares.'

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- 29 42 I have omitted the second, third and fourth stanzas, which seem rather overweighted with classical conceits.
- 31 43 This beautiful hymn seems to me to be superior even to Milton's, perhaps because of its tenderness.
- 33 44 It may be of interest to contrast the simplicity and directness of these lines with Crashaw's poem upon the birth of Princess Elizabeth, daughter of King Charles I. :

Rich, liberal Heaven, what, hath your treasure store

Of such bright angels, that you give us more ?  
Witness this map of beauty ; every part  
Of which doth show the quintessence of art.  
See ! nothing's vulgar, every atom here  
Speaks the great wisdom of th' Artificer.  
Poor earth hath not enough perfection,  
To shadow forth th' admirèd paragon.  
Those sparkling twins of light should I now

style

Rich diamonds, set in a pure silver foil ;  
Or call her cheek a bed of new-blown roses ;  
And say that ivory her front composes ;  
Or should I say, that with a scarlet wave  
Those plump soft rubies had been dressed so  
brave ;  
Or that the dying lily did bestow  
Upon her neck the whitest of his snow ;  
Or that the purple violets did lace

That hand of milky down : all these are base ;  
Her glories I should dim with things so gross,  
And foul the clear text with a muddy gloss.

- 35 45 Marvell, friend of Milton, tutor to Fairfax' daughter, secretary to the embassy at Constantinople, became Member for his native city of Hull just before the Restoration. He was like Milton in that his sweetness and intense love of beauty differentiated him from the bulk of the Puritans. This poem is a good example of his wit and delicacy, and also shows that he possessed that rare mystical feeling for flowers which, in *The Nymph complaining for the death of her fawn*, he displays for animals.

- 37 46 These poems of the poet-physician Vaughan should be compared with Thomas Traherne's, and with Wordsworth's great ode. A copy of *Silex Scintillans* was in Wordsworth's library. Vaughan is the first of our poets to reveal the unseen and the eternal in childhood.

- 38 47 ' Those white designs which children drive ' : the

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very vowel sounds of this splendid line enhance the sense of purity and brightness, as they do in the words 'And kings to the brightness of thy rising.' A similar effect is achieved, less forcibly, in the two opening lines of the preceding poem, *The Retreat*.

'he

'Must live twice that would God's face see'  
cf. St. John iii. 3.

39 49 These charmingly playful lines are from *Britannia Rediviva*. The 'venerable infant' was destined to become the Old Pretender.

40 50 This poem, together with one *Upon Young Mr. Rogers of Gloucestershire*, was first published in 1704, after Dryden's death. Its history is unknown, but probably its subject is the same 'Young Mr. Rogers,' thought to be a member of the old family of Rogers of Dowdeswell, near Cheltenham. In the shorter poem Dryden says of him that he was 'his parent's only treasure,' and that 'More moderate gifts might have prolonged his date.'

42 52 Thomas Traherne is one of the corner-stones of our poetry on Infancy and Childhood. His attitude towards childhood is extraordinarily modern, and resembles that of his fellow-mystic Blake and of Wordsworth. Perhaps his *Centuries of Meditations* are even more remarkable than his poems. I quote from them the prose version of *Wonder*:

'All appeared new, and strange at first, inexpressibly rare and delightful and beautiful. . . . My knowledge was Divine. . . . My very ignorance was advantageous. I seemed as one brought into the Estate of Innocence. All things were spotless and pure and glorious: yea, and infinitely mine, and joyful and precious. I knew not that there were any sins, or complaints or laws. I dreamed not of povertyes, contentions or vices. All tears and quarrels were hidden from mine eyes. Everything was at rest, free and immortal. I knew nothing of sickness or death or rents or exaction, either for tribute or bread. . . . All Time was Eternity, and a perpetual Sabbath. Is it not strange, that an infant should be heir of the whole World, and see those mysteries which the books of the learned never unfold ?

'The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were

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- as precious as gold : the gates were at first the end of the world. . . . The Men ! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem ! Immortal Cherubims ! And young men glittering and sparkling Angels, and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty ! Boys and girls tumbling in the street, and playing, were moving jewels. I knew not that they were born or should die ; but all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. . . . The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the World was mine : and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it. I knew no churlish proprieties, nor bounds, nor divisions : but all proprieties and divisions were mine : all treasures and the possessors of them.' (*Centuries of Meditations*: Third Century, 2 and 3.) Traherne was the son of a shoemaker of Hereford, and was educated at Brasenose College, Oxford. He was for seven years chaplain to Sir O. Bridgeman, Lord Keeper under the Cabal. The romance of the discovery of his MS. in 1896-7 is told in Bertram Dobell's Introduction to Traherne's *Poetical Works*. To Dobell's executors acknowledgment is here made for the text used.
- 46 55 It is worth while to contrast the first four lines of this poem with Mrs. Meynell's *The Shepherdess* (No. 288) and to note the change that has taken place in our way of regarding childhood.
- 47 56 John Norris held the parsonage of Bemerton, near Salisbury, which had formerly been George Herbert's. His poems passed through ten editions between 1684 and 1730.
- 49 58 The distance traversed since Ambrose Phillips, friend of Addison, wrote, is seen from the fact that Phillips was dubbed 'Namby-Pamby' by Henry Carey, the dramatist, for writing of children. Carey has thus done a disservice to the language which is hardly requited by his fine song *Sally in our Alley*.
- 51 60 Palgrave wrote of this poem : 'The admirable author of this hymn almost apologised for publishing it. Yet few child-pictures have been drawn in words or colours of more perfect tenderness.'
- 52 61 This beautiful hymn was composed at Byrom's home by Manchester in 1745 as a Christmas carol for his little daughter Dolly—'for her, and for no one else.' The version in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* is abridged to 36 lines.
- 54 63 Whitehead became Poet Laureate, in succession to Colly Cibber, on Gray refusing the appointment.

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- 55 64 I have omitted lines 55-94—the formidable catalogue of 'The Ministers of human fate.'
- 57 65 Written in 1758 at the request of Dr. Thomas Wharton, Gray's old schoolfellow and lifelong friend, upon his then only son, who died in infancy. Later Gray had affectionate pet-names for Wharton's other children.
- 66 The most poignantly direct and moving of all Cowper's poems. Lines 21-87 of the poem are printed here. The beautiful simile, which occurs almost unnoticed in *The Progress of Error*,  
 ' Patient of contradiction as a child,'  
 is of itself sufficient to prove Cowper's sympathy with childhood.
- 59 67 From *Tirocinium : or a Review of Schools* : lines 131-150.
- 60 68 *Ibid.* lines 296-313. The irony of these lines occurring in a poem written to commend private tuition at home has often been noticed.
- 69 From *Infancy—a Fragment* in Vol. IV. of the eight-volume edition of Crabbe's works. Crabbe tells the story of his own boyhood in *Tales of the Hall*, Book IV.—lines specially beloved by Cardinal Newman.
- 61 70 Blake reaches the note sounded by Traherne and goes beyond it. His lyrics have in them an almost unearthly music, and to him we owe some of the finest metaphors in the language (e.g. Tiger, tiger burning bright). Swinburne called Blake's *Auguries of Innocence* 'a series of such divine epigrams as Angels might be imagined to dictate, by way of a lesson for repetition, to little children.' That his poems were not better known in his lifetime was due in part to his method of publication. His artist soul would not permit them to be printed at all. They were engraved upon copper plates by himself and his wife—a long and laborious process—and copies were struck off as required. Of the *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*, his best-known works, from which these poems are taken, hardly more than twenty copies are known to exist.
- 68 79 From *The Cotter's Saturday Night*. *Stacher*=stagger: *flichterin*=fluttering: *ingle*=fire or fireplace.
- 80 From *The Pleasures of Memory*, 1792. Rogers' work is polished and fastidious rather than inspired. He was nine years in writing the *Pleasures of Memory*. He was acquainted with every illustrious Englishman for half a century, and was a generous patron of artists and authors.

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- 70 82 The opening lines of *Good Tidings: or, News from the Farm*—a poem written to celebrate Edward Jenner's discovery of vaccination as a safeguard against small-pox.
- 72 84 Wordsworth is the Laureate of Childhood as he is, and, it may be, because he is, the poet of Nature. For there is a connection. He not only felt the beauty of nature, but felt that nature reveals truths beyond man's vision—as a glass through which may be caught vistas of the unseen. Man's attitude to nature was therefore a matter of vital moment. Children see nature aright. Hence the importance of childhood. The child is father to the man, and the childish attitude must be recovered—its trustful acceptance, its pure emotion, its imagination, its unconsciousness and its joy. Wordsworth laid down no rule of life; that is no part of the poet's function. But he certainly felt he had a message for mankind, as is proved by his firm refusal to alter either his style or his message during all those years when his work was not only neglected but ridiculed. It seems incredible to-day that, in his fiftieth year, the whole of his returns from 'the writing trade' had not amounted to seven score pounds and very sad that his sister could write of him, in inviting at his request a friend's criticism, 'Do not fear to give him pain. He is far too much accustomed to be abused to receive pain from it (at least as far as he himself is concerned).' His own attitude was one of dignified acceptance. He neither made any rejoinder nor altered his ways. 'Trouble not yourself,' he wrote to another friend in 1807, 'upon their present reception. Of what moment is that with what, I trust, is their destiny?—to console the afflicted, to add sunshine to daylight, by making the happy happier; to teach the young and gracious of every age to see, to think, and feel, and, therefore, to become more actively and securely virtuous.' Allusions to Wordsworth's children occur frequently in his poetry. Not only of *Michael* but of himself it was true that

‘a child, more than all other gifts,  
Brings hope with it, and forward looking  
thoughts,  
And stirrings of inquietude.’

Dora is the infant in *The Kitten and the Falling Leaves* (No. 89). *Loving she is, and tractable, though wild* is a picture of Catherine. The sonnet *Surprised by joy, impatient as the wind* (No. 95) was

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inspired by her memory. She and her brother Thomas died in 1812. Wordsworth's grief remained with him through life. His friend Aubrey de Vere relates, 'Referring once to two young children of his who had died about *forty years* previously, he described the details of their illnesses with an exactness and impetuosity of troubled excitement, such as might have been expected if the bereavement had taken place but a few weeks before.' After their death he found it absolutely necessary to move away from the Parsonage of Grasmere, which stands close by the churchyard, if he was to recover 'that tranquillity which it is our duty to aim at'—and so it was that, in the spring of 1813, the Wordsworths settled at Rydal Mount.

- 72 85 Written at Goslar in 1798. 'It was founded on a circumstance told me by my sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax, in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snowstorm. Her footsteps were tracked by her parents to the middle of the lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body, however, was found in the canal.'
- 74 86 Wordsworth met the child who is the heroine of this poem in 1793 within the area of Goodrich Castle on the Wye. In 1841 he revisited the place, but was unable to find in the neighbouring hamlet any trace of his little friend. The poem was written in 1798. Wordsworth relates that he composed it walking to and fro in the grove at Alfoxden—'the last stanza first, having begun with the last line.'
- 76 87 These lines show prophetic insight into the character of Hartley Coleridge, who did, through life, preserve 'A young lamb's heart amid the full-grown flocks.' The next year Samuel Taylor Coleridge, writing to his friend Mr. Thomas Poole, unconsciously quoted from them: 'Hartley is a strange, strange boy, exquisitely wild, an utter visionary; like the moon among thin clouds, he moves in a circle of light of his own making.' John Brown, author of *Rab and his Friends*, quotes part of the poem in his little essay 'Queen Mary's Child-Garden' in *Horæ Subseciræ*.
- 77 88 *Excursion*, iv. 1132.
- 78 89 See note on No. 84 above.
- 79 90 These lines are repeated, with a few changes of words and punctuation, in the Fifth Book of *The Prelude*.
- 80 91 *Excursion*, viii. 302.
- 83 94 One of Wordsworth's clearest recollections of his

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- mother, who died when he was eight, was of her ‘pinning a nosegay to his breast when he was going to say the catechism in the church, as was customary before Easter.’
- 83 95 See note on No. 84 above.
- 86 97 From *The Prelude, Book I.* *The Prelude* was planned at Goslar in 1798 and finished in 1805, though it was not published till after Wordsworth’s death. It is dedicated to Coleridge. Wordsworth’s early childhood was spent between Cockermouth and Penrith till at the age of eight he went to school at Hawkshead. The scenes of these incidents can therefore easily be traced. It was rowing out upon Esthwaite that he beheld the terrifying peak of Wetherlam. Esthwaite Water was also the scene of the skating. ‘One summer evening (led by her)’: *her* = Nature.
- 90 98 Nothing equal in inspiration to this great Ode had appeared in English poetry since *Lycidas* was published in 1637.
- 95 — 1. 19. *Hence in a season of calm weather.*  
Wordsworth was to recover this mood once more in his majestic *Evening Ode*—the ode inspired by a sunset of extraordinary splendour and beauty in 1818.
- Oh, let thy grace remind me of the light  
Full early lost, and fruitlessly deplored;  
Which, at this moment, on my waking sight  
Appears to shine, by miracle restored!  
My soul, though yet confined to earth,  
Rejoices in a second birth;  
—’Tis past, the visionary splendour fades;  
And night approaches with her shades.
- 97 101 From the Introduction to the First Canto of *Marmion*. The Introduction to Canto Third gives many autobiographical details of Scott’s own childhood.
- 98 102 From *Christabel*. Coleridge’s best poetical work was done before the end of 1800, when the second part of *Christabel* was written. The dates of the poems here printed are 1800, 1797, 1829, 1798, (?) 1815, 1799. As we know from his school-fellow Charles Lamb, Coleridge was a remarkably precocious boy, but it is difficult to believe his own words about himself as a child: ‘Alas! I had all the simplicity, all the docility of the little child, but none of the child’s habits. I never thought as a child—never had the language of a child.’
- 104 109 The author of *Dream Children* holds a place in

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- the Temple of Childhood higher even than that to which the merit of these poems entitles him.
- 106 112 Landor's elegance, colour, romantic suggestion, and gift for achieving statuesque effects are well seen in these lovely little poems. Ianthe was Sophia Jane Swift, a friend of his early days in Wales. He saw her again more than forty years later as the Countess de Molandé at Bath, where she was staying with her grandchildren. She died in 1851. Few names have been more musically sung.
- 108 116 Landor's volcanic temperament is seen at its best in his relations with his children, of whom he was passionately fond. He was almost beside himself during a visit to Naples when he learned that they were ill, and in their games *Batbo* was always their most gleeful playmate.
- 111 119 The poem *On getting home the Picture of a Little Girl Six Years Old*, of which these are the concluding lines, was inspired by a picture by Eugenio Latilla in a shop window which Campbell passed morning after morning on his way from Lincoln's Inn Fields to the Literary Union, until finally he could resist buying it no longer.
- 112 122 Peacock—for forty years Chief Examiner of Indian Correspondence under the East Indian Company—was the author of several novels in which many of his best verses occur. His collected works were published in 1875 with a preface by Lord Houghton. Another of his poems which touches the spirit of childhood very tenderly is :
- I play'd with you 'mid cowslips blowing  
When I was six and you were four.
- 113 123 John Wilson was Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh. For a time he owned the estate of Elleray on Windermere, and was intimate with Wordsworth. He was an eloquent critic, his best papers being collected in 1842 and published under the title of *The Recreations of Christopher North*.
- 114 124 Sir Aubrey de Vere Hunt (which name he dropped in 1832) was born at Curragh Chase, County Limerick. He was at Harrow with Byron, Sir Robert Peel and B. W. Procter. This sonnet is from *A Song of Faith and other Poems*, which was dedicated to Wordsworth.
- 125 B. W. Procter—better known as Barry Cornwall—addressed these lines to his daughter Adelaide Anne Procter, who had more than her father's gifts as a poet. If Procter was one who

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had 'the accomplishment of song' rather than a poet, Swinburne, who entered the circle of his friends, was able to write thus of him at the end of his long life :

Time takes them home that we loved, fair  
names and famous,  
To the soft long sleep, to the broad sweet  
bosom of death ;  
But the flower of their souls he shall take not  
away to shame us,  
Nor the lips lack song forever that now lack  
breath.

- 115 127 Keble in the *Lyra Innocentium*, first published in 1846, and in *Miscellaneous Poems* wrote much of childhood. Many of his poems would have gained in unity of idea and in level of excellence had he pruned them. Nevertheless, if space allowed, more of them would be included in this collection, particularly *The Sisters* ('I mark'd where vernal meads were bright').
- 118 130 Dated June 1819. Little William Shelley died at Rome.
- 120 133, 134 Clare was born in a day-labourer's cottage at Helpstone, near Peterborough. He obtained some education by his own extra work as a plough-boy, and saved up a shilling to buy a copy of Thomson's *Seasons*. After publishing two small volumes of verse and a brief space of happy married life, his mind gave way and he was confined in the Northampton County Asylum. It was there, with only streets to look out upon, that these poems were written. His mind constantly recurred to the beloved scenes of his childhood.
- 121 135 Hartley Coleridge inherited a fair share of his father's gifts as well as of his instability. His poetry is largely self-delineative. After relinquishing his Fellowship at Oriel he lived chiefly in the Lake District. His child poetry owes much to the influence of Wordsworth.
- 122 137 Margaret's first birthday—March 3rd, 1843.
- 127 143 From *The Marriage of Tirzah and Ahirad*, 1827. The passage goes on :
- In his adamantine eye  
None might discern his agony ;  
But they who had grown hoary next his side,  
And read his stern dark face with deepest  
skill,  
Could trace strange meanings in that lip of  
pride,  
Which for one moment quivered and was still.

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- 127 144 Born in a farmhouse in the lovely Vale of Blackmore which his poems celebrate, Barnes after being a schoolmaster graduated at Cambridge and was ordained at the age of 46. In 1862 he became Rector of Winterbourne-Came near Dorchester. He first began to write with the object of preserving the Dorsetshire dialect, but has won a permanent place among English poets. His lyrics, full of pathos and humour, unusually varied and very perfect in form, are of the sweetest and purest water. Their dialect—which is inseparable from them—has militated against their popularity, and it is true that their language is a difficulty. But, as Matthew Arnold has said of the language of Burns and Chaucer, where the difficulty is greater, 'it is a difficulty to be unhesitatingly accepted and overcome.'
- 128 145 *Welshnut* = walnut : *drashel* = threshold.  
*Childhood*, *The Welshnut Tree*, *The Turnstile*, *The Little Sister*, *The Motherless Child*, *The Slanten Light o' Fall*, are reprinted by permission of the publishers Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.
- 134 151 Sara Coleridge was the daughter of S. T. Coleridge, and married Henry Nelson Coleridge, her cousin, who edited her father's posthumous works.
- 135 152 It is pleasing to have even a passing reference to Sir Joshua Reynolds in this volume. Palgrave has a sonnet on Reynolds' *Age of Innocence*, but, on grounds of which he himself would have approved, it is not printed here to represent him.
- 139 154 It is to be doubted whether any other Public Elementary School can boast such a school song as this, which is the glory of St. Mark's, Morwenstow.
- 140 155 From *Fifty Sonnets*, most of them printed for the first time in Nicoll and Wise's *Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century*.
- 145 157 1. 1. *Is there a word, or jest, or game* :—the classic instance of a memory of childhood adding poignancy to sadness, in Vergil's eighth *Eclogue*, occurs to the mind—lines beloved of Voltaire and Macaulay :
- Sepibus in nostris parvam te roscida mala  
(Dux ego vester eram) vidi cum matre legentem.  
Alter ab undecimo tum me jam acceperat  
annus ;  
Jam fragiles poteram ab terra contingere ramos.
- 146 158 Reference must be made to two other perfect

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word-pictures Mrs. Browning has drawn of little children :

She looked such kinship to the flowers,  
Was but a little taller  
in *A Child's Grave at Florence*, and  
Frank, obedient,—waiting still  
On the turnings of your will  
in *A Portrait*.

159 168 Charles Tennyson—who later took the surname Turner—elder brother to Alfred, Lord Tennyson, was born at Somersby in Lincolnshire. Most of his life was passed as Vicar of Grasby. His sonnets were published collectively in 1880. They are idyllic, original, intensely human and well worthy of study. The depth of his love of children is nowhere more clearly seen than in the last lines of the sonnet *To a 'Tenting' Boy*, where he finds a joy in what to many is a nuisance :

‘ And, whilst I slowly climb  
The grassy slope, with ready watch drawn out,  
To meet thy constant question of the time,  
Methinks I owe thee much, my little boy,  
For this new duty, and its quiet joy.’

See note on Lord Rosslyn’s *Bed-time* (No. 225).

160 170 ‘ Her little scroll of prayer ’ is the extract from the *Book of the Dead*, which was always placed in the hands of the deceased.

162 173 From *In Memoriam*, xlv.

164 175 From *Sea Dreams*.

166 178 Palgrave has this note on *Emmie* in the *Golden Treasury : Second Series*, “ It should be remembered that this is a little drama, in which the Hospital Nurse, not the Poet, is supposed to be speaking throughout. The two children, whose story was published in a Parish Magazine, are the only characters here described from actual life ” : (written on the authority of A. T., 1884).<sup>1</sup>

167 — 1. 2. *Oorali* is a drug that paralyses the nerves of motion, but does not affect those of sensation.

170 179 These lines and the song following (No. 180) are taken from *The Princess*.

172 182 Henry Alford was Dean of Canterbury from 1857 till his death. Besides editing the Greek Testament he was a diligent writer of verse. Two of his best known hymns are *Come, ye thankful people, come*, and *Ten thousand times ten thousand*.

— 183 *Tirlin’ - rapping*; *ben* = into the parlour (but *and ben* = kitchen and parlour); *singing grey thrums* = purring; *speldert* = stretched; *wauk-*

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- rife=wakeful; stousie=a stout and healthy child; *rin his lane*=run alone.
- 173 184 'Alfred, dear friend!'-Alfred Domett, son of one of Nelson's captains and one of Browning's oldest friends, spent thirty years of his life in New Zealand, becoming a member of its Parliament and from 1862 to 1863 its Prime Minister. He was himself no mean poet.
- 176 186 Aubrey Thomas de Vere was the third son of Sir Aubrey de Vere. He joined the Church of Rome.
- 177 188 There are frequent references to children in George Eliot's (*Mary Ann Cross'*) novels. Chapter xiv. of *Silas Marner* ends: 'In old days there were Angels who came and took men by the hand and led them away from the City of Destruction. We see no white-winged Angels now. But yet men are led away from threatening destruction. A hand is put into theirs, which leads them gently forth towards a calm and bright land, so that they look no more backward; and the hand that leads them may be a little child's.'
- I am indebted to Messrs. Blackwood & Sons for permission to reproduce these stanzas from *Brother and Sister*.
- 182 192 Included by permission of the literary executors of Walt Whitman and Messrs. Doubleday, Page & Co.
- 186 194 The 'Snowdrop Monument,' known also as the 'Sleeping Children,' stands at the east end of the south choir-aisle in Lichfield Cathedral. It bears the inscription :

Sacred to the Memory of  
Ellen Jane and Marianne  
only children  
of the late Revd. William Robinson  
and Ellen Jane his wife.  
Their affectionate mother,  
in fond remembrance of their "Heav'n-lov'd  
innocence,"  
consigns their resemblances to this sanctuary,  
in humble gratitude  
for the glorious assurance that  
"Of such is the Kingdom of God."

It is the work of Sir Francis Chantrey and was set in the Cathedral in 1817. The Rev. William Robinson, who died in 1812, was Prebendary of the Cathedral and Rector of Swinnerton. John Keble, W. Lisle Bowles, Mrs. Hemans, and others have been moved to write verses upon it. Two snowdrops are in the right hand of the younger child, who was burnt to death; it is

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- told that it was in trying to reach some snow-drops on the mantle-shelf that her frock caught fire.
- This poem is reproduced from Jean Ingelow's *Poetical Works* by permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.
- 197 198 Mrs. Alexander (*née* Humphreys) was born in Co. Tyrone. She was a direct descendant of Jeremy Taylor, and published several volumes of verse including *Hymns for Little Children*, 1848. Two of her best known hymns are *The roseate hues of early dawn* and *There is a green hill far away*.
- 198 199, 200 W. B. Rands is the author of the *Lilliput Levée*. *The Flowers and Praise and Love* are included by permission of Mr. John Lane.
- 199 201 William Johnson, who assumed the name of Cory in 1872, was one of the most brilliant and versatile Eton masters of last century. This poem is reproduced from his *Ionica* by permission of Messrs. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. A book, *Extracts from the Letters and Journals of William Cory*, for subscribers only, was printed at the Oxford University Press in 1897.
- 200, 202 These poems are included by permission of the publishers, George Bell & Sons, Ltd.
- 201 204 Brought up in the little village of Ballyshannon in Co. Donegal, Allingham is at his best in describing little things, momentary happenings, and detached scenes.
- 203 206 The two poems by William Allingham are included by permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.
- 207 George Macdonald was essentially more a poet than a novelist. The second stanza of the lyric *The Grace of Grace* reveals the depth of his reverence for children :
- Had I the grace to win the grace  
Of childhood, loving, shy, apart,  
The child should find a nearer place,  
And teach me resting on my heart.
- 204 208 This poem from Sydney Dobell's *Poetical Works* is included by kind permission of Mr. John Murray.
- 207 209 Palgrave has written much of children in *Idylls and Songs*, 1848-1854, and *Lyrical Poems* (1871). Reference must be made to the lines *Margaret Wilson*, in which is told very simply and tenderly the story of a little heroine who saved the three smaller children of whom she had charge from a passing train—at the cost of her life. With the present poem, *On the Love of Children*, may be compared the sonnet by Elizabeth Rachel

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Chapman on the same theme in *A Little Child's Wreath*. I quote four lines :

Pure, He could feel their splendid guilelessness ;  
Kingly, He recognised their royalty ;  
Longsuffering, He was one with them, nor less  
Grandly magnanimous than they was He.

- 208 210 From 'London Bridge,' in *Visions of England* (1881). It is fitting to have a tribute—and such a tribute—to Sir Thomas More in this volume. The lines beginning 'Hence among those he stands' sound a trumpet-note that has in it an almost Miltonic ring.

Sir T. More has left a few poems behind him, written in his youth. Among these are metrical stanzas, after the manner of the time, explanatory of some tapestry in his father's house depicting nine stages of man's life. The first of these represented childhood in the figure of a boy whipping a top. More's lines are :

I am called Chyldhod, in play is all my mynde,  
To cast a coyte, a cockstele, and a ball ;  
A toppe can I set, and dryve in its kynde ;  
But would to God these hatefull bookees all  
Were in a fyre brent to pouder small !  
Than myght I lede my lyfe alwayes in play,  
Which lyfe God sende me to myne endyng day.

- 209 211 Adelaide Anne Procter, daughter of Bryan Waller Procter, published her first verses in *Household Words*, of which Dickens was editor, under the name of 'Mary Berwick.' She refused to send them in her own name, lest Dickens should be tempted to take them, not for their merit, but on account of his friendship for her father and herself.

- 210 212 Richard Wilton graduated at S. Catharine's College, Cambridge, and became Rector of Lonesborough. His poems deserve to be better known.

- 211 213 Few poets in our own day have written more of childhood than the Manx poet and quondam Master of the Crypt School, Gloucester, T. E. Brown. The tenderness and dainty beauty of these poems need no pointing out.

- 217 222 Christina Rossetti afterwards added two stanzas to this poem. They are omitted here. For permission to include this poem I am indebted to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

- 223 'Lewis Carroll's' Diary for July 4th, 1862, has the following entry : 'I made an expedition up the river to Godstow with the three Liddells ;

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- we had tea on the bank there, and did not reach Christ Church till half-past eight.' A later entry adds : ' On which occasion I told them the fairy-tale of " Alice's Adventures Underground," which I undertook to write out for Alice.' 'Alice' herself is *Secunda* in the poem. Henry George Liddell was Dean of Christ Church from 1855 to 1891.
- 219 225 Reprinted from the Earl of Rosslyn's *Sonnets*, with acknowledgments to Messrs. W. Blackwood & Sons.
- Swinburne, in his *Studies in Prose and Poetry*, says of this sonnet : ' There are loftier sonnets in the language, there is no lovelier sonnet in the world than the late Lord Rosslyn's *Bedtime*. " It gives a very echo to the seat where love is throned"—the painless and stainless love of little children. Landor might and would . . . have given a place to this divine sonnet and its coequal companion in a truly blessed immortality, Mr. Tennyson-Turner's on *Letty's Globe*, in his list of exceptions to the common rule or the conventional axiom which denies that any work of man's can ever be absolutely perfect.'
- 220 226 Eric Noel—the Hon. Roden Noel's youngest son—died at the age of five, and is the subject of his most pathetic and one of his best books of poems—*A Little Child's Monument* (1881). This poem is included by permission of Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.
- 221 227 From the Prologue to *The Earthly Paradise*, by kind permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.
- 228 The same idea is expressed by Victor Hugo in the lines :
- A chaque pas qu'il fait, l'enfant derrière lui  
Laisse plusieurs petits fantômes de lui-même.  
On se souvient de tous, on les pleure, on les  
aime,  
Et ce seraient des morts s'il n'était vivant, lui.
- 222-229- It is regretted that, owing to difficulties of copy-  
224 232 right, Swinburne is so inadequately represented in this anthology. His genius touched infancy and childhood with peculiar delicacy and reverence. The extracts here included are reproduced by permission of Mr. William Heinemann.
- 224 233 My uncle, William Threlkeld Edwards, of Pembroke College, Cambridge, was drowned at the age of twenty-one whilst bathing in the Cam. His poems were published after his death in *Papers of an Undergraduate*.
- 225 234 Reprinted, with acknowledgments to Messrs.

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- Chatto & Windus, from the St. Martin's Library Edition of the *Poetical Works of Bret Harte, including Some Later Verses*.
- 226 235 This poem is reproduced by permission of Messrs. Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.
- 229 238 From *Aspromonte*.
- 230- 239, These poems are reprinted by permission of Mr. John Murray.
- 231 240
- 231 241 This extract is reprinted by permission of Messrs. Chatto & Windus.
- 235 244 Written for *The Magic Meare*, a Masque, by Louis N. Parker and G. Stuart Ogilvie.
- 233- 249, These poems are reprinted from Edward Carpenter's *Towards Democracy* by permission of Messrs. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd.
- 240 250
- 241 252 The same theme forms the subject of the sonnet beginning 'A man that sees by chance his pictures made' in *The Growth of Love*. For the use of this poem and of *Be like One of These*, and *Millicent*, I have to acknowledge the generosity of Dr. Bridges and the permission of his publisher, Mr. John Murray.
- 242 254 These lines by Sarah Chauncey Woolsey—better known as 'Susan Coolidge'—appeared in *Scribner's Magazine* in 1872. They were copied and hung near the Cradle Tomb in King Henry VII.'s Chapel, Westminster, at the instance of Lady Augusta Stanley. The baby is Sophia, fourth daughter of James I., 'a royal rosebud plucked by premature fate and snatched away from her parents that she might flourish again in the Rosary of Christ.'

(SOPHIA ROSULA REGIA PRÆPROPERO FATO  
DECERPTA, ET JACOBO MAGNÆ BRITANNIÆ,  
FRANCIAE ET HIBERNIÆ REGI ANNÆQUE REGINÆ  
PARENTIBUS EREPTA, UT IN CHRISTI ROSARIO  
REFLORESCAT, HIC SITA EST. JUNII XXIII.  
REGNI R. I. III. MDCVI.)

She was born at Greenwich in 1606 and died in infancy. Her sister Mary, born in 1605, who died aged three, lies buried close beside her. Near by repose the bones of the two little princes murdered in the Tower.

- 243- 255- Possibly these poems of William Canton's will come as a delightful surprise to many. Their simplicity, truth, variety and tenderness are worthy of such a friend of children as the author of *The Invisible Playmate* and *A Child's Book of Saints*. *The Comrades*, from which they are taken, deserves to be better known.
- 246 259

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247, 260, John Bannister Tabb—an American by birth—  
 248 261 was cabin-boy in a blockade ship during the  
 American Civil War. He subsequently became  
 a priest. In his later years he was blind. His  
 work is chiefly religious, and consists mainly of  
 short lyrics. Felicity of phrase, personification,  
 and a happy mingling of the familiar with the  
 majestic are features of his verse, but there is  
 much more. He depicts himself in *The Old  
 Pastor*:

How long, O Lord, to wait  
 Beside thy open gate ?  
 My sheep with many a lamb  
 Have entered, and I am  
 Alone, and it is late.

Messrs. Burns, Oates & Washbourne, Ltd., have  
 kindly given permission for the use of these two  
 poems.

248 262 From *The Pageant of Life* by kind permission of  
 the author's literary executor, Mr. Henry J.  
 Glaisher.

249 263 Acknowledgments for the use of this poem are  
 due to Mr. William Heinemann.

— 264 This hitherto unpublished sonnet was given to  
 me by Mr. Edmond Holmes for this anthology.

252- 266- The *Child's Garden of Verses* was published when  
 256 270 Stevenson was thirty-five. The idea of writing  
 it, his mother has recorded, was first suggested  
 to his mind by Mrs. Sale Barker's rhymes in  
*Kate Greenaway's Birthday Book for Children*.  
 Stevenson had a power of recovering not only  
 the thoughts and ideas but the feelings of his  
 childhood that is almost unique. Sir Graham  
 Balfour in his *Life* quotes Baudelaire's definition  
 of génie, 'Le génie n'est que l'enfance retrouvée  
 à volonté.' The *Child's Garden* struck a new  
 note in English child-poetry and revealed new  
 possibilities.

In a letter, dated *Nice, Feb. 1883*, to his nurse  
 Alison Cunningham, telling her that he was  
 dedicating the book to her as 'the only person  
 who will understand it,' Stevenson wrote of it  
 as 'this little book, which is all about my child-  
 hood.' But, personal as the *Child's Garden* is,  
 not only his own mother but a vast company of  
 mothers and fathers as they walk in it

may chance to hear once more  
 The little feet upon the floor.

For permission to include these five poems my  
 acknowledgments are due to Messrs. Longmans,  
 Green & Co. and Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

## PAGE NO.

- 256 271 Included by kind permission of the Oxford University Press.
- 257 272 From *A Vision of Souls and Other Poems*.
- 258-273, These two poems are included by permission of Mr. John Lane.
- 260 274
- 264 275, These two poems are included by permission of Mr. John Lane.
- 276
- 265 277 Dedicated to 'A. M. P.', whose identity I have been unable to trace.
- 267-278-  
273 281 Acknowledgment is made to Messrs. Burns, Oates & Washbourne, Ltd., for permission to reprint these poems.  
 Francis Thompson holds a high place in the poetry of childhood. As with Wordsworth, a deep reverence for childhood formed part of the permanent background of his mind, and children and their ways furnish him with some of his most striking imagery—the 'freak Of heavenly hide-and-seek' in *Any Saint* for instance.  
 Thompson is great in the wealth and splendour of his imagination, in the subtlety of his thought, and in his mastery of language. The story of his almost starving in the streets of London can be read in Mr. Wilfrid Meynell's delicately beautiful biographical note in the volume of *Selected Poems*. One incident of those dark London days and nights is told by himself :

I waited the inevitable last.

Then there came past

A child ; like thee, a spring-flower ; but a flower  
 Fallen from the budded coronal of Spring,  
 And through the city-streets blown withering.  
 She passed,—O brave, sad, lovingest, tender  
 thing !

And of her own scant pittance did she give,

That I might eat and live :

Then fled, a swift and trackless fugitive.

Therefore I kissed in thee

The heart of childhood, so divine for me.

From the children of Mr. and Mrs. Wilfrid Meynell—'the family in London into which he was received'—Thompson learnt anew

The subtle sanctities which dart

From childish lips' unvalued precious brush,

and they were the inspiration of much of his child poetry.

- 268 279 The subject of this poem is a village child, whom the poet met on the common at Storrington.
- 270 280 Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, in the Biographical Sketch already referred to, says of these lines, 'Constant

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- to the end, when he died some newly pencilled lines were found, addressed "To Olivia," a yet younger sister, recalling the strains of fifteen years before.' They breathe, indeed, the spirit of the last line of *To my Godchild*:
- Look for me in the nurseries of Heaven.
- 275, 283, From *The Crescent Moon*. *Dādā*=elder brother.
- 276 284
- 276 285, For permission to use Mrs. Hinkson's two poems  
286 I am indebted to Messrs. Sidgwick & Jackson,  
Ltd.
- 278 287 Included by kind permission of the Proprietors of *Punch*.
- 279 288 Perhaps the most perfectly simple and tender portrait of a little girl in our poetry. Mrs. Meynell has also written, with penetrating insight, of early childhood in seven essays called, in a phrase of Francis Thompson's, *The Darling Young*.
- 282 292 From *Poems New and Old*, published by Mr. John Murray.
- 293 Permission to include this poem has been given by the publisher, Mr. John Lane.
- 285 296 Compare with this Swinburne's *Étude Réaliste*, ii. which ends with the beautiful lines :
- No rosebuds yet by dawn impearled  
Match, even in loveliest lands,  
The sweetest flowers in all the world—  
A baby's hands.
- 286 298 Reprinted with acknowledgments to Messrs. Duckworth & Co.
- 299 For permission to use this poem I am indebted to Mr. Martin Secker, the publisher of Mr. F. M. Hueter's *Collected Poems*.
- 287, 300, These two poems are included by permission of  
288 301 Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co., publishers of Mr. de la Mare's *Songs of Childhood*.
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- 293 305 This poem is inscribed 'To the memory of our sister, Eacy Young.'
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- 313 316 From *Collected Poems of W. H. Davies* (London, Fifield), by permission of the publisher.
- 314 317, 318 From *Memories of Childhood*, with acknowledgments to the publishers, Messrs. Selwyn & Blount.
- 316 319 From *Blue Days and Green Days*, with acknowledgments to the publishers, Messrs. Maunsell & Co., Ltd.
- Wizard *lear*. *lear*, or *lere*=lore, scholarship. Cf. Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, VI. iv. 4:
- He was invulnerable made by magicke *lear*.
- 317 320 From *The Littlest One*, by permission of Messrs. Harrap & Co.
- 321 Reprinted from *The Fairy Green* by kind permission of the author and Messrs. Methuen & Co., Ltd.
- 318-322-  
320 324 From *Bread and Circuses* (John Lane). Reprinted by kind permission of the Proprietors of *Punch*.
- 321 325 From *Nursery Lays of Nursery Days* (Blackwell).
- 325 329 This poem, like the one following (No. 330), is printed in *The Oxford Book of Australasian Verse*. It is reprinted here by kind permission of Thomas C. Lothian Proprietary Ltd., Melbourne, Australia. I had looked long for a poem expressing adequately the idea of *Incarnation*—and found it at the Antipodes.

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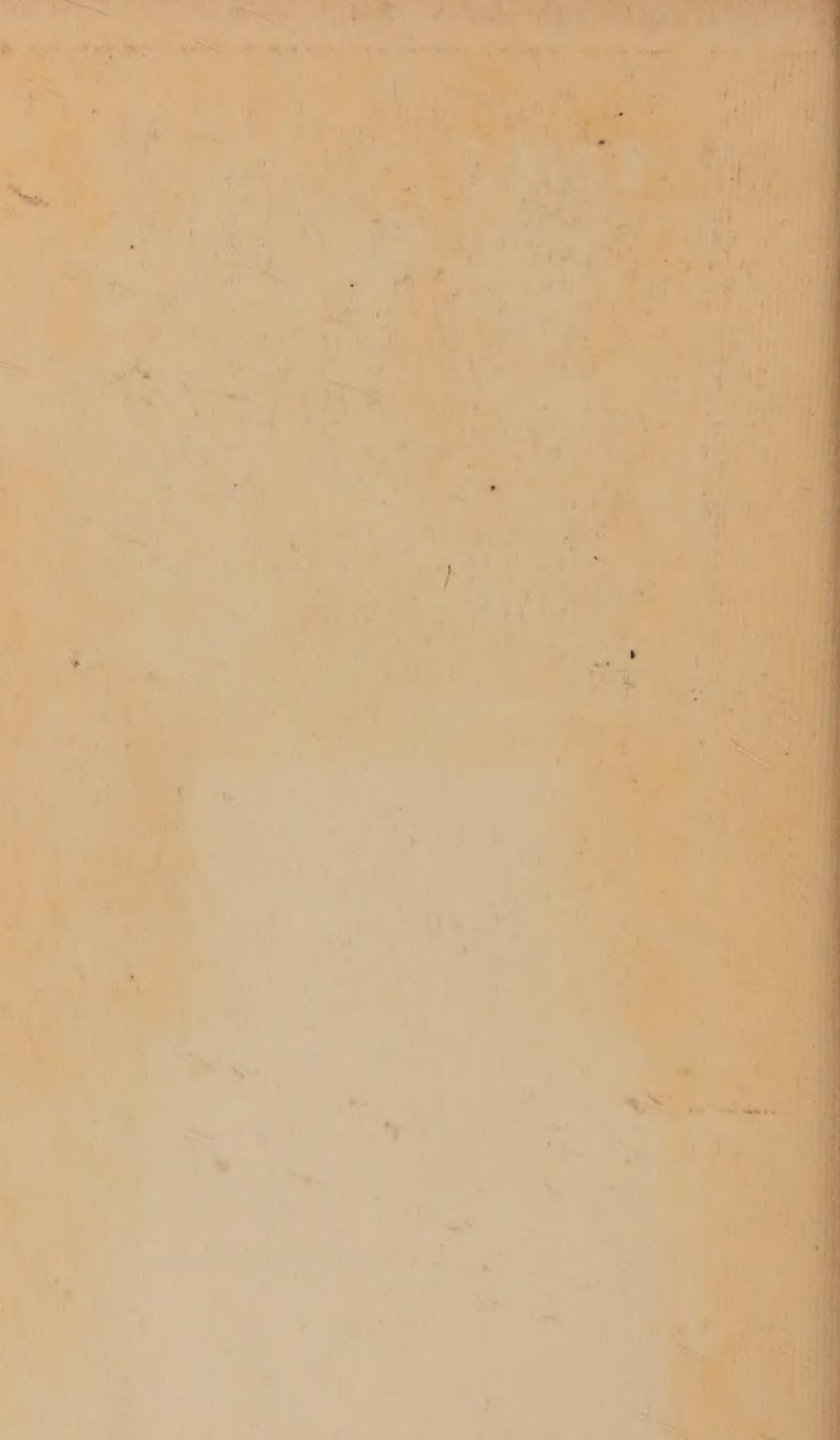
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